

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Grace Sugita Hawley

Grace Sugita Hawley, youngest of five children, was born in 1931, in Honolulu, O‘ahu, Hawai‘i.

Her parents, Saburo and Shizuno Sugita, were both born and raised in the islands.

Saburo Sugita and his siblings founded and operated Holly Bakery, a bakery that serviced many schools and restaurants on O‘ahu. They also ran Hawaii Cotton Factory that produced filling for *futon* and *zabuton*. Both were thriving businesses.

Saburo Sugita, his siblings, and their growing families occupied several house lots purchased on O‘ahu.

In the prewar period, Saburo Sugita escorted his father, Sadakichi Sugita, on a number of trips to Japan and often entertained visiting Japanese officials.

In February or March, Saburo Sugita was removed from his home, interrogated, and held at the Sand Island Detention Center for ten months.

In late 1942, Shizuno Sugita was informed that if she and the children agreed to be moved to the U.S. Mainland, the family could be together. Given the alternative of her husband’s continued detention at Sand Island, his prolonged separation from loved ones, and an uncertain future for all, Shizuno Sugita agreed to the move.

In early 1943, the Sugita family arrived at Jerome War Relocation Center, Arkansas. There, they settled into barrack life. Saburo Sugita served as a block manager.

As Jerome War Relocation Center closed in 1944, the Sugitas were moved to Heart Mountain War Relocation Center in Wyoming where they remained until the war ended in August 1945.

Encouraged by a friend in Minneapolis, the Sugitas in St. Paul, Minnesota, opened a restaurant that developed a following among Hawai‘i servicemen stationed at nearby Fort Snelling.

Returning to the islands in 1946, Saburo Sugita tried but failed to revive Holly Bakery.

Grace, schooled in the islands and the U.S. Mainland, graduated from Farrington High School on O‘ahu. A retired realtor, she raised two daughters.

Tape No. 57-4-1-12

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Grace Hawley (GH)

Hawai'i Kai, O'ahu

January 13, 2012

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN) and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

MK: Okay, this is an interview with Grace Sugita Hawley. This is session number one on January 13, 2012, and we're in Hawai'i Kai, O'ahu. Interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto.

As I said before we began the interview, we'll just sort of go in order. So, the first the question I have for you is when were you born?

GH: Nineteen thirty-one.

MK: And where were you born?

GH: Here in Honolulu.

MK: And what was your mother's name?

GH: Shizuno.

MK: Mm-hmm [yes]. And what have you been told about your mother's background?

GH: Well, we always used to say my mother was born in the wrong generation because she wanted to do things that she couldn't do. You know, they were very limited in that generation. So she used to work in a doctor's office. My father had seen her there. He remembered she worked there, but you know, they tried to arrange marriages. When they arranged to have them meet and all that, she didn't want to get married. (Chuckles) But they said, "It's time because of your age," and she wasn't that young. Some of them got married very, very young in those days. But at that time, he remembered seeing her. And so, he was very eligible and all because they already had the business, so I guess she decided she'll do it. But she had to give up her job, poor thing. She really enjoyed working.

MK: And your mother was nisei or *issei*?

GH: Nisei. She was born here, in 'Aiea. Mm-hmm [yes].

MK: And where did she grow up?

GH: I think 'Aiea and then Mānoa. They moved to Mānoa. Right before Mānoa Marketplace now. We used to go playing in the field in the back. It's Mānoa Marketplace now. We used to go and visit my grandmother.

MK: And what were your grandparents doing in Mānoa?

GH: I don't know enough about them. I really don't know. All I remember is that my grandmother was very religious. She used to go to the temple all the time. But I don't

know what they did, and I think my grandfather was my mother's stepfather. We found out much later. I really don't know enough about it. And he died early.

MK: And then what was your father's name?

GH: Saburo Sugita.

MK: And what can you tell us about his family background?

GH: He was born in Kaua'i. He grew up in Kaua'i. They had a lot of sons there. And so, the usual—my grandfather [Sadakichi Sugita] was working for the plantation. But he came early. He was an early immigrant. So by the time the immigrants were all coming, he was kind of established. He moved up to *luna* (foreman). Then he went on his own. He had a business. He started a store—grocery store, dry goods store, and all those things—for the Japanese people. He started a Japanese[-language] school there. He said, "We need a Japanese school." So he was quite active.

And then, we heard this story. It sounds a little funny now, but in the old days, they didn't have marine insurance for shipping things. The ship that had all his goods for his store that he had ordered sank. So he lost everything. He went bankrupt. (Chuckles) Then he had to start all over again. The kids had to go back to work. That's why my father couldn't finish school. They had to go back to work, and they had to work at the plantation again. But my grandfather didn't give up. He recovered and went into business again after he recouped. Then decided to move to Honolulu. He wanted to go into business in Honolulu. So he sent two of his sons, which was my father and another.

MK: And your grandfather's name, what was his . . .

GH: He's Sadakichi [Sugita].

MK: Sadakichi. And you've mentioned that he had businesses in . . .

GH: Kaua'i.

MK: What part of Kaua'i?

GH: I forgot, you know. I think Kōloa.

MK: Ah, okay.

GH: I think Kōloa. I'm not too sure. I never did go that far back. He used to talk about when he was a child and his childhood days. But I never remembered where.

MK: You mentioned that when your grandfather's business went bankrupt, your father and his brothers, they had to . . .

GH: They had to go to work.

MK: . . . go to work. So how much schooling was your father able to get up to that time?

GH: Maybe he went to middle school because he and my mother used to talk about it. My mother used to say—she was very intelligent, you see. She didn't have (much) education. She went less than him because she said, "Your English is so poor, considering you went to school longer than I did." (WN chuckles.) That's what they used to talk about, and I don't know how many years difference, but I think she didn't make it to middle school. But she studied by herself. So her English was very good, and she always worked for a *haole* doctor. So that's why, you know, I think it was a little different. He grew up with the pidgin.

MK: When your grandfather's business went bankrupt, what happened to the family?

GH: They stayed there. They worked in the plantation again. They worked until he could recoup his losses. Then he went into business again.

MK: Tell us about the businesses that the family established on O'ahu.

GH: Oh! In O'ahu. First, he said he wanted to start a bakery—my grandfather. So he told his two sons to go to Honolulu and go to work for a bakery and learn the bakery business. That's how they learned, and they went to this bakery. It was pretty well known in those days. They worked there, and the business was not as good. He [GH's father] told the owner, "We're going to open our own bakery."

And the guy said, "Oh, you're not going to make it."

He says, "I'll bet you I'm going to make it. I'm going to be better than you."

My father was an entrepreneur, just like his father. He was like that, so it was good. So they did open their own bakery. They did well. This other (bakery) went out of business. But they did very, very well, and they were the second-largest next to Love's [Bakery], I would have to say. In the old days, it was Love's Bakery. THE bakery, you know? And they were Holly Bakery. H-O-L-L-Y, Holly Bakery. They had all the schools—almost all the schools throughout the island—he had trucks delivering all over. Restaurants. You know, the old days, restaurants never made their own bread. They buy the bread. He had a lot of restaurant friends. He was kind of a salesman-type, my father. So that's how they did it, and they did quite well.

MK: So his clientele was mostly the schools and restaurants.

GH: Schools and restaurants, I guess that's the bulk of his business because it was wholesale. They were operating twenty-four-hour shifts. My father used to talk about the number of bread they baked every day, and I can't remember all those numbers. But he used to always talk about those things.

MK: And to have a business that big, who did all the work?

GH: Oh, well, two brothers worked inside the bakery. They're strictly inside. They bake the bread. His sister moved over, too, from Kaua'i. She was married, and she moved over (with her husband). She was one of the bakers, and she used to bake pies. The (retail) store was kind of a sideline. There was a little retail store in front of the bakery. They had a pie man and a cake man. He baked the cakes, and he made doughnuts. You know, not a very fancy bakery, but he was good at decorating. So he used to do all wedding cakes. Tiered kind, you know? Everyone who got married in the family, he made all the wedding cakes. They had deliverymen going all around (the island). Yeah, they had trucks. And then, what did they have? Oh, they had a secretary—a bookkeeper in the office. I don't know who else they had. They had some bakers. They had to have because it was twenty-four-hour shift. You know, they just kept going, going, going.

MK: Where was the business located?

GH: Oh, Pālama. You know, near Tamashiro Market. There's a building 'Ewa from Tamashiro, about a block away. I think that building is still there.

MK: Oh. And what was your grandfather's role in all this?

GH: Oh, he never worked in the bakery. (Laughs) He was just a major stockholder. He was the head, I guess. He was retired. I don't know how old he was. Quite young, I think. He was retired, but he always had ideas. Oh, there was another older brother who did not want to get into the bakery business. (Chuckles) He didn't want to get involved. And there was another brother. So there were one, two, three, four—yeah, two inside. One wanted to be a salesman. My father was the manager and the salesman. And that brother wanted to be the salesman. The oldest brother didn't want to do anything because he didn't want to stay in the bakery business.

So my grandfather started a cotton factory in Kalihi, near where we lived. We were all in Kalihi area. He said, “We need a cotton factory, you need *futon* and *zabuton*.” It was a guaranteed business. He had this idea. I don’t know where he found out where he can get cotton from Kona. Either he leased land or something and grew cotton—and actually grew cotton, you know. Not just from the Mainland. We had some cotton in our backyard of our cotton factory. We used to play out there. They had planted a little bit. But anyway, he started a cotton factory, got a truck, had a deliveryman. They delivered all the *futon* and the *zabuton* cotton. It’s amazing because all the daughter-in-laws, and they hired some ladies, had to (process) the cotton. How they did it, I don’t know, because the machine did a lot of it and cleaned it out, whatever. And then, as it went through the processor, it folded it into the size for the *zabuton* and the *futon*. (The ladies) would wrap it up. The ladies would be doing something on that end. But it would come through all nice—square, you know. We used to see that because we just used to play around. The *futon* was the big one. So, anyway, it was all wrapped up. Then the man would deliver it all over, so they were getting orders all the time.

MK: Were the *futon* and *zabutons* bought by individual families or . . .

GH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes].

MK: . . . businesses?

GH: People. People would call. All Japanese people. The office was downstairs of our house. The phone would ring, and my mother would say, “When you answer the phone, all you have to say is, ‘*Chotto matte kudasai*.’” (MK chuckles.) *Chotto matte kudasai*. She said, “Don’t say anything else,” because we were going to say the wrong thing. Most of these people speak Japanese when they call. We have to run over and call somebody to answer the phone and take the order because she didn’t want us to take the order.

(Laughter)

It was really funny, so we always remembered that—*chotto matte kudasai*. (MK and WN laugh.) So, that’s how we did it. Because they couldn’t have somebody sitting in that office, you know?

MK: And so, this cotton factory and the family home, where were these located?

GH: All in Kalihi. My grandfather bought a lot of land. He bought for each son. We all lived on that street. Kāhai Street. One, two, three—three uncles. My aunt lived on the same street. The next block, another uncle lived there. So, he bought a lot of land. I don’t know why he went to Kalihi. Eventually, it was rezoned to warehouse, I think.

WN: So the cotton factory and the bakery were two separate, different (businesses).

GH: Mm-hmm [yes]. Separate. Two companies.

WN: The bakery was near . . .

GH: Pālama.

WN: . . . Tamashiro Market. And then the cotton factory was near your home.

GH: Mm-hmm [yes]. Was next door to our house.

MK: You know, with two thriving businesses, how active was your father in the community?

GH: He was pretty active. That’s how this all started, as you know, how he got interrogated and all that. To begin with, my grandfather was retired, and he wanted to go back and forth to Japan all the time.

The oldest son said, "I want to move"—he had a Japanese wife from Japan. He said she's lonely, so he said, "I want to go back and live in Japan." That's when he wasn't doing anything anyway. He was the luckiest of all of them. He didn't even have to work and was getting paid for it, you know? So he finally went back to Japan.

When they [GH's uncle and aunt] moved back to Japan, I guess he [GH's grandfather] just had the sons in Hawai'i take care of the cotton factory, and the wives are working in there. So my grandfather wanted to go back all the time. My father had to take him. They used to go back and forth, all on record. It's all on record—embassies, files, everything.

That's how they [FBI interrogators] said, "Why did you have to go back all the time?"

He said, "Because my father wanted to go, and I had to take him. Somebody had to accompany him."

Well, the thing is, the last trip he did was the year the war started. That summer, he took my sister. So that summer, they were going to stay really long. August, September—in Japan, there was talk of war. Everybody knew the war is going to start. So they were trying to come home. In the meantime, my mother got sick. She got really, really sick. She was in the hospital. She thought she was going to die already, and he couldn't come back. She was panicky, and he didn't know when he could come back. And they're thinking about the war. He finally got (help) through the embassy. They got him on the ship, which was the last ship that came through. He came back before the war started, but the ship after him had to turn around. The U.S. would not let it go through. So he came back on the last ship, luckily. That's another thing that was against him. They said, "Why? Why were you on that last ship? How did you get the connection to get on that?" And so, all this kind of questions they had. There was nothing that they did wrong, but it just looked suspicious, I suppose.

MK: Every time that your grandfather and father would go back to Japan, where would they go?

GH: They stayed in Hiroshima. That's where the family home was. So he had property in Hiroshima. That's where they came from originally—no, Yamaguchi, originally. But they lived in Hiroshima, and he bought property (there). So my uncle was really lucky. He had it made. All he did was buy (more) property. He was getting a salary, you know? He was getting a salary all that time, so he bought a lot of property. Eventually, he died in the atomic bomb [attack] because he was looking after his property. Isn't it ironic? He was looking after his property while the family all went into the hills, huh? They had to go—they warned them. He was the only one that stayed to look after his property—to check on that. He was killed in the atomic bomb.

MK: So you know, your father and grandfather would go back and forth to Japan. Their business is going on. I was wondering if your father was a member of any of those Japanese merchant organizations or Japanese area clubs or . . .

GH: He was . . .

MK: . . . temples . . .

GH: I don't know which ones . . .

MK: . . . or anything like that?

GH: I don't know which ones exactly. But I know that—he was more a promoter, whatever he did. He sponsored this Japanese baseball team. I forgot—Asahi?

WN: Mm-hmm [yes].

GH: Baseball team, he did. Because he always liked sports. So that and what other kind of athletic groups he did? I can't remember all the names of the Japanese organizations.

MK: How about like the temples, you know, the Hongwanji or Soto Mission?

GH: He was Zen. I don't know whether he was always Zen. I'm not too sure.

MK: But I guess with all his travels back and forth to Japan, it seems like that may have been one of . . .

GH: Yeah, that's . . .

MK: . . . main reasons.

GH: That's probably. Also, he entertained a lot when the officials from Japan came. He had close ties with them. He would entertain (them) and take them on a Pearl Harbor tour. (Chuckles) His name was on the log—all the time taking them. (GH and WN chuckle.) You know, those are the kind of things they said. But you know what, (in) the old days, that's what they did. They took them around the island and he used to do that kind of entertainment. (Chuckles) That was all on record.

MK: I think you mentioned last time that he was also an accomplished artist and singer?

GH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes]. In Kaua'i, he was self-taught. He used to tell us stories when he was a kid. He used to be a good artist. He used to paint. When they were kids, they always did murals. The teacher used to say every year they're going to have a contest—which room is going to win. And he was such a brat. He was a real brat, I think, the way he talks about what he used to do. But he used to negotiate with the teacher and say, "If you want us to get the prize, you have to let me do this, this, this, this." So, she'd go along. She'll go along with him because she wants them to get the prize, and he was very good. He was a very good artist.

But the more interesting one was when he learned to sing *naniwa-bushi*. He used to go and see them. They used to have all those troupes coming from Japan. He loved *naniwa-bushi*. He was only a teenager. He would go and listen and go up in the hills, in the mountains, and practice. He used to practice, practice. . . . My sister told me this story that he used to tell her. He would really belt it out because he's in the mountains and nobody's around. He used to practice, practice all the time. He would follow a certain style. I guess they have their idols, yeah? Then, one day, the lead singer got sick. So they announced—they said, "Oh, (the singer) sick. Is there anybody who can sing *naniwa-bushi*? Please come up."

He said, "I can sing."

(Laughter)

And he [the announcer] said, "You?" He was a teenager. They didn't think much of it, you know. When he went up and sang, he sang like that (singer). They couldn't believe it. The head of the troupe said he wants to take him back to Japan to train him.

He went to meet my grandfather, and my grandfather said, "No, you're not going to be an artist. You're not going to be a singer. You're going to be a businessman!" (Laughs) Because that's all he could think about. In those days, that's the worst thing to do—to be an entertainer.

So he said, "I could've been a famous *naniwa-bushi* singer," he says, "but I had to give it up. My father wouldn't let me do it." He couldn't be an artist. They wanted to send him away to study art formally, but he couldn't. My grandfather wouldn't let him do any of that. (Chuckles)

An interesting story about the *naniwa-bushi* is, in Honolulu, years ago, after—oh, way, way, way after the war, we were living in Hawai'i again. This famous *naniwa-bushi* singer that he liked came and sang. He went up there and he invited him over for dinner. He made a party for him. He told him, "You know, I always—you're my idol." He says,

“I practice and I sing. I can sing like you.” And he did, you know. I heard he was so good, but I didn’t appreciate *naniwa-bushi* in those days.

And you know, he said, “You sing for me, then, tonight.” He sang for him. He was so impressed, he gave him his—what do you call that—the kimono with the *mon* on it?

MK: Oh, a *montsuki*. Oh.

GH: Anyway, he gave him that. He couldn’t believe it. He said, “You mean to say you just practiced yourself, and you learned? You taught yourself?”

“Yeah.”

He said, “Wow, he sounds like me!” (Laughs) Because it sounded like him. That’s how good he was. So my sister, when she—I don’t know why we never taped his singing. We used to say we were going to do it, but we never did.

And one day, she had this famous song that this famous (singer) sang, she sent it to me, and she said, “You listen to it. It’s almost like listening to Father. That’s how good he was. That’s the closest thing.” She said that was the exact style he sang. So it’s too bad because we never did tape it. He used to go around singing a lot. He used to do *benshi*, too. You know, those old days when they had the (silent) movies?

WN: Narrator, yeah.

GH: He used to do that for the Japanese movies. My uncle used to—his hobby was to show movies. (Chuckles) He would rent movies. They used to go to all the communities, like Mō‘ili‘ili and Waipahu. All those Japanese communities. They used to show free movies. My father would do the *benshi*. At Japanese[-language] school, too. They used to play the movies, and we used to hide. (Chuckles) We (were) so embarrassed because he used to do the *benshi*, and the *benshi* would be all the different roles. He did it all because he was a real ham. He liked those things. Funny, how none of us became like that.

MK: That was all pre-war, yeah?

GH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes].

MK: That he would do those things in the communities. Wow.

GH: Until the war started and everything changed.

MK: He was active.

GH: Yeah.

MK: Going back to Kalihi, you folks grew up in the Kāhai Street neighborhood area. I was wondering, first of all, how many sisters and brothers did you have?

GH: We had four girls and one boy. I’m the youngest. My brother was the oldest.

MK: Looking back on those days, what was it like to be a kid in that part of Kalihi? What did you folks do for fun?

GH: We used to play. You know, those days, we used to play out on the street. Baseball and all kinds of things. It was safe to play on the street with the neighbor kids. I used to sneak and ride the bike because my father said, “Girls should not be riding a bicycle.” So I used to go and ask my neighbor. She had a bike. Oh, I used to just love to ride. I don’t know how I learned myself, but I used to go over there. My father would bring home leftover pastries from the bakery. But we didn’t want to eat the leftover. (Laughs) And I would go

over there, “Anna, would you like some doughnuts?” She just loved all those things, yeah? So I said, “Can I borrow your bike?”

(Laughter)

So that’s how I did it with her, but we used to play out there with all the kids. There were a lot of kids in the neighborhood. Baseball and all that.

MK: Who were your neighbors in that area of Kalihi?

GH: We had a lot of cousins. (Laughs) You know, we had relatives. We grew up with cousins, more than friends. We had somebody to walk to school with—one of the cousins. When we went to school, the cafeteria manager used to know us—“Oh, you’re a Sugita girl?” We just grew up with uncles and aunts and cousins. Sometimes we would go camping with all the cars. You know, so many cars going out to Sandy Beach with all the uncles and the aunts and the cousins, you know? We were very clannish in those days. That’s why we were very sheltered. It was kind of a shock for us to (leave) there when we were going to camp. It was like a little world of our own that we were in, and it was such a change for us.

MK: Being, you know, successful business people with lots of kids, and the mothers working, did you folks have help in your house, like a live-in person?

GH: Oh no, no, no. My mother didn’t work. I mean, she worked in a cotton factory maybe a few hours or whatever, but she was home most of the time. She did all the sewing. She sewed all our clothes. She even took up tailoring because she wanted to do men’s pants and all that. She was a housewife. Most all of them were. They only spent a few hours in the cotton factory.

MK: And then, you know, being one of the girls in the family, what responsibilities did you have? Your chores.

GH: Oh, I’m embarrassed. (Chuckles) I was pretty spoiled. (MK chuckles.) When we were growing up, my mother was quite strict. But somehow, I got away with things. We had a big house. It was like two houses put together. There’s bedrooms in the back, there’s two living rooms and all that. That’s where we had the (*butsudan*)—in the back. You know, when they had services, they always used (that) room. We had four girls. The three of them had to do sweeping, mopping the floor, and all of that. I didn’t do any of that. I don’t know why I didn’t do any of that. Dinnertime, taking turns washing the dishes, putting it away, drying and putting it away. I don’t remember any of that. (MK and WN laugh.) Funny, yeah?

WN: Well, you were the youngest.

GH: Yeah.

WN: And you had three . . .

GH: I was pretty spoiled.

WN: Three sisters.

GH: Well, I was more spoiled as I grew up. But at that time, maybe they made me do just the real light things. They thought I was so hopeless or something. (MK and WN laugh.) They made me do very, very light things.

WN: What about your brother? Did your brother do anything or . . .

GH: No, he was . . .

WN: He was—being the only boy.

GH: . . . like the lord and master.

(Laughter)

MK: Oh.

WN: Yeah, yeah, that's what I was thinking.

GH: But he was a good kid. He was a good—to the very end, he was a good brother. He was a good son. The only time that I remember they had to discipline him was—he had a bike. He had a real nice bike, and he took good care of it. They had it hanging downstairs in the basement. They had a rack for it and everything. When he went out on his bike, they told him he had his limits. He couldn't go beyond a certain street. He always obeyed. But one time, I don't know how they found out he went beyond that. So they hung his bike and hung it for a long time. They said he couldn't ride it. That was the only time I remember that he was disobedient.

My cousin, who used to look up to him like an older brother, and he used to call him *Nisan*. This cousin was about my age. He used to come and borrow—he was the only one he used to loan his bike to. He would come and say, “Can I borrow your bike?”

He [cousin] liked to show it off because it was a nice one. When we would play baseball, he would park it there. You know how they like to just leave it parked and played ball and all? He used to borrow it. And so, I used to borrow. I said, “Can I borrow it?”

I'd go around the other way so my mother can't see me. I go this way so I don't pass in front of the house. So he [cousin] said, “Don't fall with it now.” He was so scared, (chuckles) you know, because my brother would never let me use it. Because my father wouldn't want me to be riding. So he would let me borrow it. That was funny.

WN: You know, Kāhai Street today—you know, there's some homes, and there's . . .

GH: There's few . . .

WN: . . . small businesses and things like that.

GH: Uh-huh [yes].

WN: Was it like that back then? Was it like homes and businesses?

GH: No, it was strictly residential. It was really a residential area. The whole area from Nimitz—Nimitz was split up because the Japanese[-language] school was there. Nimitz and Kalihi Street. That became Nimitz Highway. The Japanese school was right in there. Below that, all residential. Nimitz and below, until Silva Street. Yeah, Silva Street is the last after Kāhai—the last street. All residential, all houses. There was a corner grocery store. Now it's a little bigger store. But my cousin, who lived in one of the houses on our street, he put up a body-and-fender shop (much later). He went into business. His father gave him the land, and he put that up. Another uncle lived in that house for a long, long time. And way, way, way, way after, you know. He wanted to put up a warehouse or something because that's what it's zoned for, really. Ours became apartments. My father, when he moved back to the Mainland, my father sold it to his brothers. And then, they had the cotton factory and our house. The two uncles bought, and they put up apartment building. So that's why it's so changed now. And across the street, I see this old house still there. But most of them are either warehouse or apartment or some kind of business.

WN: So you folks were *makai* of what Nimitz is today?

GH: We were on—yeah, *makai* of Nimitz.

MK: You know, you mentioned that it was predominantly like your cousins in that neighborhood. And was it mostly Japanese or other ethnic groups?

GH: The one I used to borrow the bike from—she was Portuguese? Maybe Portuguese. It was a sad story because she was kind of like an orphan, and her grandmother raised her. And her grandmother was an alcoholic.

MK: Oh no.

GH: Because I remember, she used to stagger down the road. (Chuckles) It's so funny because she was always staggering. You never see her walking straight. But she took care of her, you know? She raised that girl. The girl was a little older than me. Sometimes, she [the girl's grandmother] would come up the steps and try to—you know, those days, they don't lock the doors, yeah? She would walk in, open the door, and my mother says, "Wrong house!" (Chuckles) That's how she used to do it. She used to walk around and get into people's houses.

But anyway, they were Portuguese—I don't know, and mixed. The rest, Japanese. . . . Oh, next door to us was German. That's right. That was interesting. German family. Nice, German family. Yeah. That's unusual, yeah? Maybe he was married to a Hawaiian. He was a widow(er). We never saw the wife. But his son was my age—was handsome, good-looking. All his sons were good-looking, but that one looked a little Hawaiian—a little *hapa*. But his older two—the oldest one, good-looking. They were all good-looking sons, and he was a real handsome German. Looked German. He married a Filipino woman. So she came over to live there. That's when she always said, "Oh, I hope you grow up and marry my brother-in-law." She used to tell me that because we're same age, and he was so cute. But anyway, that was unusual, yeah, German family (in that neighborhood).

MK: And then, you mentioned like a corner market. Were there any other businesses in that street?

GH: That's the only one. That's the only corner grocery store. We used to go there, and they had candy and stuff like that. They used to live upstairs of the store.

MK: So if you folks needed other goods and things, you would just go . . .

GH: Oh, you know the old days . . .

MK: . . . Kalihi?

GH: No, the old days, the fish man would come. He would come over.

WN: On a truck?

GH: Yeah. He used to come over to our house, and my mother would buy fish. Then, the grocery man would come. He would park across the street. My mother would buy odds and ends, but she used to tell us, "Don't you come. After school, if he's there, don't you come near." She trained us so that we never went and begged for anything. She said it's embarrassing. So just, "I'll buy for you folks, whatever you need, but don't come and beg for anything."

So we never went near the trucks. (MK laughs.) There was another one, to this day, it's still there—Tanabe Shōten. Tanabe Superette on Ke'eumoku [Street]?

MK: Yeah.

WN: Yeah, yeah.

GH: I don't know why or how it happened, but he used to come and take (her) order, and he used to deliver (them).

WN: All the way from there?

GH: Yeah.

WN: From Ke'eaumoku? Oh.

GH: I don't know—and he didn't go to every house. Maybe through the bakery, yeah, there was some connection, I don't know. But I still picture him sitting there, taking (an) order. He would come back next time and deliver. One day, I met someone who happened to be relative of that Tanabe. I said, "Oh, what a small world." So she [mother] didn't have to go out shopping. They all come to her. Nowadays, it's different, yeah? The supermarket.

MK: And then, you mentioned the Japanese-language school was nearby?

GH: Uh-huh [yes]. That's on Nimitz.

MK: Yeah, what was the name of that school?

GH: I don't know. (Chuckles)

MK: Did you go?

GH: Oh, oh yeah. See, because you folks don't know the old days. It's like it's almost compulsory with Japanese families. You know, like going to English school [public school], going to Japanese[-language] school after [public] school. Every day, including Saturday. Saturday, too, because we were so conditioned. But after [public] school [hours], we go to Japanese school because it's on our way. It's perfect. It's near our school. So on the way home, we're going to go to Japanese school. Actually, we used to study harder for Japanese school because we wanted to get good grades. We always used to think, oh, we don't want to disgrace our parents. (Laughs) They're PTA [Parent-Teacher Association] and all of that. So Japanese school ended as soon as the war started. All that ended. And you know, I don't remember a thing. I can't read or write. I went to the fifth grade. What a waste, huh. I put a mental block or something. I think, maybe, because we couldn't use it at that time.

MK: And then, for your older siblings?

GH: They remember.

MK: They remember.

GH: We're all one year apart. But the one, one year above me, she remembers. I don't know why I can't remember a thing. So when my daughter started going to Japanese school and brought back report cards, I couldn't even read it. (Laughs) And I said, "Oh, I'm illiterate when it comes to Japanese." (WN chuckles.)

MK: How about like a lot of nisei, they talk about the morals or ethical teaching they used to get at the Japanese-language schools. Do you have a memory of that?

GH: No, I don't think it was that. It was more academics.

MK: It was more academics.

GH: Oh, they emphasized that. You know what it is? It's competitiveness. Because I used to get the best grades in my class—I remember that. But they give you that feeling that you got to make it. They put your name on the board. Number one, number two, number three. If you don't get it—I mean, if you're used to getting good grades, you know, it's a real letdown. So I still remember all through those years, I had to be number one. There (were) only three of us always competing with each other. I used to tell them, "I'm going to be number one." I used to make it. But that's how they make you feel. You know, instead of just everybody—whatever grades you get. But no, they put your name on the board, and they give you all that attention. So I don't remember any moral teachings. To me, it was more academics.

- MK: And like for your parents, did they kind of tell you and your siblings, you folks should study hard and be good at Japanese school?
- GH: Yeah. They emphasized studying hard at Japanese school.
- MK: And then, for English-language school, where did you go?
- GH: Pu‘uhale [School]. It’s still there. That’s one of the schools they were going to close down. I was just reading about it. It’s near Marukai, yeah?
- MK: Mm-hmm [yes].
- GH: That was our school.
- MK: What are your memories of going to Pu‘uhale?
- GH: Well, I went to fifth grade when the war started, and we went to [internment] camp. But I remembered, we always had cousins to go with. So the thing is that when we went to camp, my teacher was very nice and very understanding. Because in those days, nobody knew anything. She couldn’t understand either, and I don’t know what to tell her. My mother made us go—all of us go—and tell the teacher. She didn’t go with us. I was in the fifth grade. Sixth grade, was it, when the war started? Fifth or sixth.
- I guess it was sixth. So anyway, when I told her I had to go away and all that, she was so nice. She said, “When you go away, you write to the class. You write to us, tell us where you are, and I’ll read it to them. I’ll show them on the map where you are.” Which was very nice of her. We were so embarrassed. I felt, oh, how embarrassing—going away, and we don’t know why, we don’t know where. She was so nice to me. And so, I used to write to them. And they would answer—they would write to me. She said, “We will put the map up, and show them where you are on the map.” Because we had no clue where we were going, originally. So I used to exchange letters. I never saved any of them.
- MK: Oh, that was my next question—did you save them?
- GH: No, no.
- MK: I wonder if that teacher ever saved.
- GH: I don’t know. My sister used to write to her ninth-grade teacher. And somebody saved her letter. Somewhere, I saw her letter. I don’t know how or where it came up. She and I were the only ones who used to write to (our) classes.
- MK: When war came, when December 7th occurred, what do you remember about that day?
- GH: Oh, that was the day that I went to get my cousin—little cousin—to bring him to show him the Christmas tree. Because my father decorated—he did all the decorating because he was an artist. He would bring home the tree and trim the tree. So the next morning, I was going to show my small cousin. He must’ve been around three or four or something. So I went to get him, and then I heard the plane. So I sent him back, and I came (running) home. Our cotton factory had a corrugated roof. So you can imagine, when shrapnel fall, the noise. My father thought it was kids throwing rocks. He was sleeping because it was Sunday morning. He said, “Oh, the kids are throwing rocks again.” That’s what woke him up, I think.
- When we found out that we were being attacked—I guess somebody turned on the radio or something. But I was looking out the door, and I could see the airplane. Because we were—Kalihi is very near Pearl Harbor and Hickam [Field]. So, I could see—the planes were already flying low in Kalihi. I could see the *hinomaru* on the airplane. That’s how I knew it was a Japanese plane. And that mentality, at that age, I thought they were going to land because they were so low. I thought they were going to just land and kill us all. That’s all I could think of. I was so scared. My mother said, “Don’t stand near the door.”

You know, because they could hear the planes already. But that's what I remember, mostly, is that plane I saw. I could see the pilot and the *hinomaru*. But we did have shrapnels that fell from, I guess, whatever strafing they did that fell on our roof.

WN: Did you understand what war was or what was going on?

GH: No, that's all I thought, is that they came and they were going to land and kill us all. I didn't understand enough about it yet. Until later. Well, fifth grade, I should have known a little bit, yeah, you think. But we were very sheltered, very immature, I think, for a fifth-grader, compared to today's fifth-grader.

MK: You mentioned that there was shrapnel right on your cotton factory roof and everything. Were there other houses in the vicinity or the roads?

GH: No, there were no damages in our neighborhood.

MK: No damages?

GH: Mm-hmm [yes]. Because I read about damages out towards town, but not in our neighborhood. Not on our street.

MK: And then, like your mom would tell you get away from the door . . .

GH: Yeah.

MK: . . . what did your mom and dad think?

GH: Well, they were listening to the radio. Right away, they know that there's a war that's going on. But that's about it. From that night on, we had to have blackout. They wanted you to paint your windows or put black shades. I don't know how you can do it so quickly though, yeah? I don't know whether we did it from that night or what, but we had to paint the windows all black. Can you imagine having to paint your windows black? (Chuckles)

MK: Yeah.

GH: And what are you going to do later if you didn't need the black windows?

But I remember they used to do that and play *hanafuda* with lanterns. But we couldn't turn on lights at night. Candles or lanterns—(they) used to play *hanafuda* on the floor with the windows all painted black. Shortly after that, we had to have air raid shelters built. That was another thing. Everybody's going to compete who's going to have the biggest, fanciest air raid shelter.

(Laughter)

Isn't that funny? There's a war going on. My father said he's going to put his above ground, underneath all the trees in the front yard. He said it's camouflaged. He put sandbags, and he had somebody build it for him. It's a walk-in kind. Huge, with canned goods, all stocked up and everything. He did that. My uncle said, "I'm going to put mine underground, under the driveway. (WN chuckles.) And he did it underneath. You know, those days, you had the long driveway and the garage in the back? So underneath that driveway.

WN: He dug under there?

GH: Mm-hmm [yes].

WN: Wow.

GH: He had somebody do it for him—the digging. That’s how my cousin got hurt because that thing fell on his head when some kind of a tool fell. But they dug underneath, and that’s what they did. So there were all kinds of shelters. (Laughs) It’s so funny, yeah? Competing.

WN: So in your father’s shelter, you could actually walk, . . .

GH: We used to play (there).

WN: . . . stand up and walk?

GH: We used to play house in there. Yeah.

WN: And he made it out of wood?

GH: No, he made it out of sandbags.

WN: Oh, the whole thing was sandbagged?

GH: Yeah, all stacked up.

WN: The walls, and the. . . What about the . . .

GH: But the roof, I don’t know how . . .

WN: . . . top? Was it *totan* (corrugated) or. . .

GH: Maybe *totan*, yeah. Maybe he had to do that because he put all the leaves and the palm trees and all that camouflage. There were trees in the front yard. So he said, “That’s a good camouflage.” So he threw all of that on top. (WN chuckles.) Yeah, it was a pretty big one. Stocked up and everything.

My mother used to stock up—we had a big basement downstairs, and that was the pantry, walk-in kind. She used to buy things by the cases. So she had everything. That’s why she used to tell us, “You don’t need to go to that man and tell him what you want. We got everything you need here.” She used to buy soda by the cases and canned goods and everything. So she had everything stocked. When we had to go away, she had to give it all away to the aunts and uncles. We had to take all that loss. She gave all that food that she stocked up—gave it away.

MK: Did your dad also make an air raid shelter for like the workers for the cotton factory and the bakery?

GH: No, I think they shut that down already.

MK: They had to shut it down early?

GH: Yeah, I think they shut it down.

WN: I forgot to ask about the cotton factory. Was there any kind of a retail outlet at all there?

GH: No.

WN: Or was it strictly manufacturing?

GH: Yeah, that’s all. Hawai’i Cotton Ginning [i.e., Hawai’i Cotton Factory] or something, they called it. But that was a good idea, you know? Because he said every family needs *zabuton* and *futon*. Where do you get it otherwise?

WN: What was going on with the bakery from December 7th?

GH: Oh, that was another problem. They picked up my father, I think, about February or March. And the bakery, I think what happened is because my grandfather was a major stockholder, and he was an alien, and he was in Japan, they froze some of the funds. The government can do things that you can't believe. They froze the portion of the funds for the bakery, and it really limited their operation. That's how the business went downhill. I don't know whether this was after they'd got my father—they picked him up—or before. He said, in order to try and convince them that you're not doing anything suspicious, they donated new trucks. They donated (to) the Red Cross because they had a lot of trucks. They donated a couple of trucks (to) the Red Cross. My uncle volunteered as a block warden or something—they needed that. All those kinds of things. They did all those things, and that didn't help. They still took my father. They accepted all of that and still took him in.

So, yeah, the bakery, because the funds were limited, and then they had to operate with less trucks, their business was kind of going down. They couldn't function as well. They couldn't bake as many bread. They had to downsize their orders. I think they lost a lot of business that way, even like restaurants and things. And then, my father wasn't out there promoting. Because he was, more or less, the (one) guy who got the business.

(In) the Japanese community, word gets around pretty fast. They all knew that he got picked up. They all found out he got picked up, and there's always some friends and some enemies, yeah. He always remembered that. He said, "There's some of these people trying to save their skin." They testified against him. He said he couldn't believe that because it's nothing, really, that he did. But anyway, he tried to get all these influential people to testify for him for his character reference. He was good friends with the assistant chief of police. (He) wrote a nice letter and everything, but even that didn't help. When they took him in at that time, he was in Sand Island [Detention Center] for ten months until we were going to be shipped out.

MK: Now what do you remember about his actually being taken in? Were you around when they took him in?

GH: You know, the thing is that we all have different memories. Funny, yeah? I thought I remembered, but my sister tells me something different again. I remember coming home from school, and the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] was there, ransacked the place. They tore down the *Hotoke-san* [i.e., *butsudan*] and we had both. One is Shinto.

WN: Mm-hmm [yes]. *Kami-sama*.

GH: Yeah, *Kami-sama*. That was on the shelf. But the *Hotoke-san* was a real big one, built-in kind. They used to have all the services there in that room. So they just took it apart. You know, terrible! It's religion. The *Kami-sama*, they tore that one down because that's Shinto. That's emperor [worship], yeah? I didn't know this until later.

I thought they took my father in at that time, but according to my sister, my mother had to find my father, wherever he was. They went and got him and picked him up there. So I could be wrong. Something that's so long ago, that memory gets kind of hazy. What you remember sometimes stays in there, and it might be the wrong thing.

MK: So was there any opportunity for you or your sisters to say . . .

GH: Goodbye?

MK: Yeah.

GH: No, no! No warning. They didn't even ask my mother to pack anything for him. Just the shirt on his back. And so, nothing. No warning that they're going to keep him there. They just said they're going to take him in for interrogation. And (under) the bright lights—just like a criminal. (He) had to sit there with the bright lights, and they interrogated him for hours and hours and hours. After that, they said they're going to take him in to Sand Island. That's where all the men were. They had Italians and Germans, too.

- MK: When he was taken in, what was your mom's understanding? Like what did she think was going on?
- GH: Well, she's a very quiet person. Very quiet. She doesn't say much. She never told us very much. It's funny, the way we were raised, we don't ask too many questions. (She may have told my brother some things.)
- MK: When you look back on those days . . .
- GH: She had a hard time though.
- MK: Yeah, what do you remember?
- GH: She's the kind that wouldn't be moaning and groaning or anything. She wouldn't show us how worried she was. That's why it's hard. She was that kind of person. Never said very much, kept it to herself, pretty much. Finally, when they were allowed to visit, she would go. I don't know whether it was once a month or what, but they would go on the ferry, because (back then), Sand Island was a separate island. They would go to immigration [station], I think. And from there, they'd have the ferry take them.
- (Years later,) when they came to visit me. I took them one day and drove out there—Sand Island. I (asked), "Do you remember?" She said she can remember that as soon as they landed at Sand Island, she said they had to walk a long time. It's because, you know the beach part? That's where all the bunkers are. That's where they were. So it's on the other end of Sand Island. She said they had to walk all the way. So she said, "We did walk long ways." So I drove all the way out to the beach park, and then we saw those bunkers. It's all the park area, yeah? He said, "Yeah, this is where we were." Yeah, well, it's kind of interesting.
- MK: What did she ever tell you about those visits to your father?
- GH: He told us more than she did.
- MK: Yeah?
- GH: She just told us that all the wives would go. She didn't say too much. She didn't say too much, or I don't remember.
- MK: And what did your father say?
- GH: He used to talk about those days. They used to pick up shells and polish the shells. Nothing to do, huh? Pick up shells, polish the shells. But he also had to do latrine duty. They had to do things like that, which he said, "I have to do all these things. I never did such things!" Naturally, they're not used to it because these are all either businessmen, doctors, fishermen, schoolteachers, people who are not used to doing those things. They made them do it all. But there was one man who got shot. They thought he was escaping or something like that. That was really scary. But other than that, what did he used to talk about? I forgot now—the things that they did.
- MK: Did he talk about the living conditions? What kind of thing he lived in?
- GH: No, it was more like army style, I think. Something like that.
- MK: You mentioned that your mom would say—oh, she would go there with all the other wives. Did she ever mention the names of the other wives that would go?
- GH: No.
- MK: None of them . . .

- GH: They don't talk to each other very much, I think.
- MK: Oh, so none of them were like her close friends or . . .
- GH: Oh, no, because they didn't know each other.
- MK: They didn't know each other?
- GH: No. The people who were in there—they didn't all know each other. Some, he knew. But the wives didn't know them, I don't think.
- MK: And then, as the kids of the dad who's been detained, what did you folks know and how did you feel when he was away?
- GH: It was hard to understand because we didn't know anything. We didn't know why or what's happening. We didn't know any of that. So I can't remember too much about those days, except that he wasn't there.
- MK: I was wondering, how did people treat you and your family in those days?
- GH: Well, being that he was gone, not everybody knew, except the neighborhood. They all knew. We're all very close. But in school like that, they didn't know. The hard part was when we told them we were going away. We still had to go to school. I guess we had to tell the teacher in advance. That was a little embarrassing because we don't know what to say. What can we say, you know?
- WN: Was your father the only member of the family that was detained?
- GH: Mm-hmm [yes]. Because he was—he was not the oldest because the oldest was in Japan. But because he was the oldest there, and my grandfather was the alien in Japan. So my father had to kind of bear the brunt of it.
- WN: Did you know of anybody else in that neighborhood that got taken away?
- GH: No—oh, the (Japanese school) principal. They were there. See, they took the Japanese[-language] school principals, fishermen, (priests).
- WN: Shinto and Buddhist priests.
- GH: Yeah, the Buddhist priests. Because my father knew some of them when we were in camp. What else—and some businessmen. Like he was considered a businessman category. Our doctor [Dr. Kazuo Miyamoto] was there because he wrote a book about Japan. He traveled all over Japan, and right before the war, he wrote a book. So he treated me (at the hospital)—it's a good thing he was our family doctor. He was there in camp. (Chuckles) Lucky.
- WN: You mean at Sand Island?
- GH: No, in Jerome.
- WN: Oh, in Jerome?
- GH: Yeah.
- WN: Oh, okay.
- GH: So yeah, in Sand Island, my father met some (people) he knew. They all pretty much knew each other. And then, they went in different directions, depending on their status.
- MK: You know, did you or your siblings ever get to go visit your dad at Sand Island?

- GH: No, no. Only the wives (were allowed).
- MK: Only the wives?
- GH: Mm-hmm [yes].
- MK: Towards the end of 1942, your family decided to go to the Mainland with your dad . . .
- GH: She came home and told us.
- MK: Your mom . . .
- GH: She came home one day. When she visited, and he must've told her that—they don't give him much of a choice, you know. He told her that they are planning to ship all the families. If we agree to go, then they would join the families—all the men would get to join the families. But if we don't, they might have to stay there for the duration of the war, and which, you know, (is) not a good idea. So naturally, all the wives are going to agree to go, for the families to be together. They won't tell you where you're going, but somewhere on the Mainland. They give you like a short notice, maybe a few weeks or something. I don't remember.
- MK: So how did you folks react when your mom said, "We're going to go"?
- GH: Well, it was kind of scary because we don't know where we're going. We didn't know where we were going, and the conditions and all of that, we didn't know. Except that we thought, well, at least he's going to be with us. So it's better. So my mother said, "Yeah, I think it's better that we go because at least we'll all be together, wherever we're going." So that's how it started. But she had to liquidate. Lucky for us, we had relatives that could stay in our house. Can you imagine people who had nobody? What they're going to do with their homes? It's just going to rot away or something. But one of the uncles was going to stay in our house, and he rented his house out.
- MK: (Chuckles) Okay.
- GH: Stay at ours. Because you know why? I think we had too many things in our house, and the (cotton factory) office was there, too. Then my mother had to sell all. Oh, my father had a fairly new car. He had a Packard that was only—I guess right before he got picked up, he bought it. So another friend bought it and got a bargain. They're all bargains. So he said, "Everybody got rich from me." (Laughs) So he sold the car. And she gave away all the food she stocked up on. All the furniture, everything, just—we walked away as is. So my uncle got to live in that house with everything in it, piano and all.
- MK: You know, since it was your uncle's family that moved into the house, were you able to get some of those things back?
- GH: When we came back, naturally, the wear and tear and all that. Everything, as time goes on—three years, just looked older, but everything was still there because they're relatives. Yeah, they just went back to their house. But we didn't live there very long. My father decided to move and get a better house, a newer house. So we moved.
- MK: I was wondering. I've heard of stories where some families got rid of really Japanese-like things.
- GH: Oh, in California, yeah?
- MK: But in your case, . . .
- GH: Yeah, in California, they did because what they did was they were going to come and—in California, West Coast, they were going to go through all those homes and confiscate them, yeah. Where, in our case, we didn't have to do that because there (were) too many Japanese. How could they do that? How can they control that, yeah? So all we know is

- the time when they picked him up. You know, when they went through some things. But after that, they didn't come back.
- MK: So when the decision was made to go to the Mainland, your mom liquidated what she could liquidate. And then the other things, your uncle and the family took care of, yeah?
- GH: Mm-hmm [yes]. They just moved right in.
- MK: What preparations, besides that, did she make for going to the Mainland?
- GH: Oh, she had to go and shop (for) warm clothes. None of us knew how cold it was going to be. It's winter, but we don't know where we're going. We don't know how cold. They could at least give you a clue. We didn't know where we were going and how cold it would be. We knew it would be cold. She went and got the things for us. She made things for us that wasn't warm enough. She went and bought sweaters, but sweaters are so light. That's all we had for warm clothing. She went Downtown, and you know McInerny's [McInerny Store] in those days?
- MK: Mm-hmm [yes].
- GH: She went to McInerny's and bought all this fancy sweaters, (chuckles) which was so impractical when we got there because they were not heavy at all. But in those days, they had nothing heavy here. Nobody went away. So we really suffered the cold. And first thing we got there, we had to buy things.
- MK: And then, I was wondering. For ten months, your father was at Sand Island. When was the first time you actually got to see your father?
- GH: Oh, at immigration station. We were going to meet there, and that's when the fathers were all, you know—especially outside-island families—worse because I guess the wives couldn't go visit them. So their ship came in, and so all the families were there. We were there. Then the fathers came and joined the families. So it was kind of a dramatic time. Fathers (for the) first time, got to see their families in almost a year. Then they took us to the ship. *Lurline*.
- MK: And this was before or after the holidays of '42?
- GH: I think it was right after Christmas. I'm trying to remember. I think it was right after Christmas.
- MK: So you still had Christmas at home before?
- GH: I think so. I think so. And then New Year's over there, on the ship. I think was on the ship. It took about five days on the ship. I'm pretty sure.
- MK: What was that like? The trip on the ship.
- GH: The trip wasn't bad. It wasn't bad because it was a nice ship.
- WN: Oh, this is the *Lurline*?
- GH: *Lurline*, because it was a cruise ship in those days. Well you know why, they converted that to a troop ship. (Years later) by a coincidence, we met this friend who was a client of my husband's. He was in the army (during) World War II, stationed in Burma. He said when their tour of duty was over, they were going to ship them back to California. He came back on the *Lurline*. He said, "And that was the ship that came to pick us up." He said that's when he found out later that that's the ship that we were on.
- Because one day, my father—they were out to breakfast. My husband used to take my father (to have) breakfast with his friends. And this guy was talking about it, and my father talked about the ship. He said, "We went on the *Lurline* to the Mainland."

- He says, "I went on the *Lurline*, too." So he always remembered that. He said both of us, for different reasons, were on the *Lurline*. Because he said they converted it to a troop ship.
- MK: Were you aware at that time that there were troops on the same ship?
- GH: Oh (yes), there were troops.
- MK: Yeah?
- GH: Mm-hmm [yes]. In fact, some of the girls would dance the *hula*. They played music, and they would dance *hula*. They used to have kind of like an entertainment. I was so young, so I didn't pay much attention. But I think some of the girls and the Navy guys, they were flirting because no matter what, at that age, they were teenagers. So I remember that there was some entertainment.
- WN: So you saw your dad at the immigration station.
- GH: Mm-hmm [yes].
- WN: So you all went together?
- GH: Oh, yeah, because we were leaving already. We had to leave early in the morning, where only the relatives can come and see us. It's like we have to sneak away, early in the morning, when it was still dark. Then, somebody took us to immigration, where we met my father.
- MK: Were there any limitations on what you could take?
- GH: I think so. That, I don't remember the details, but I think we were limited because none of the big things—maybe my mother took her sewing machine. I don't know. Or maybe she bought one later because she had to have her sewing machine. She always sewed. But other than that, there wasn't any point in taking too many clothes because we needed warm clothing. I guess she felt we had to buy it. In camp, we ordered through Sears and Montgomery Ward catalogs. They would come once a month.
- MK: You know, I remember meeting someone who said it was like an adventure. What was it like . . .
- GH: What was adventure—which one?
- MK: Like going to the Mainland.
- WN: Leaving Hawai'i.
- MK: Leaving Hawai'i.
- GH: Oh.
- MK: She described it was like an adventure for her. What was it like for you? You know, fifth-grader going with family to—you don't know where.
- GH: It was not an adventure. It was still unknown, where we were going. But it was an experience. I have to say it was an experience, being on a ship like that for the first time. When we reached San Francisco, there was a band playing. I'm pretty sure there was a band playing about—where was it, San Francisco. Anyway, but then there were armed guards. From there on, that's when my sister remembers it more vividly. I don't—somehow, I was oblivious to some of those things. But she's one year older than me. That sister, she had terrible memories. She says, "I remember so distinctly how the armed guards were there." Because you see, from San Francisco, they had to bus us. . . . Wait

now, we had to go to Oakland. We had to go on the ferry. So I'm not sure whether from there, we went right on a ferry. Anyway, she said armed guards were there and then took us on a ferry. And then, we went to Oakland where the train starts, from Oakland, not San Francisco. So anyway, she said, "I always remember the armed guards." She said that feeling was terrible. I don't even remember that well. Vaguely, maybe I do.

On the train, another thing that she remembered was we had to keep the blackout—the black shade. I don't remember. I thought I saw some scenery. So maybe certain times of the day, they blacked us. Maybe when we went through a town, they blacked us. Because they didn't want us to see where we were. And they didn't want people to see us. Because I remember going through the Grand Canyon. I remember the long train, as we—you know all the curves? That's kind of scary. That was Grand Canyon. Because my mother told me to write a journal, and then we never saved it. I wrote all the places. She said, "Write down all the places you've been to."

My aunty told me, she said, "You save this so we can read it when you come back."

And so, I remember all those places. The first stop was Santa Fe, [New Mexico]. There was snow on the ground. They let us go out and get some fresh air and touch the snow. I remember that. That was our first stop. I remember the Grand Canyon—the ride—you know, all the curves there. But every state we went into, they announced it, pretty much. You know, where we were. I used to write it all down. (Chuckles)

That's when we first saw the shantytowns. You know, when we got closer to Jerome in Arkansas. Oh, it's pitiful, when you see the people. You can see the shacks, and they're just standing there with no windows. Some have no doors. They're just standing there, barefoot. There were colored people—used to call "colored" before. They're just standing there. Their life looks so dismal. (It was) the first time we saw that kind of thing because in Hawai'i, we never saw that.

What else did we see? We did get to see some things, so I don't think it was blacked out all the way. I still remember the tunnels, and definitely had to close the windows. But otherwise, it was still kind of—we didn't know where we were going. Imagine, yeah? Don't know where we're going, all the way, for about four or five days on the train.

- MK: When you were on the ship, and then the train, were there opportunities for you to be with other kids or other people besides your family?
- GH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes]. Well, the thing is that on a train, we're all sitting. On the ship, our neighbors—you know, the ones right across of our room—we got to make friends with them. That's how we got to be good friends with some of them. On the train, we found out how sheltered we were. That's when I said, you know, we were so clannish and sheltered. We never mingled enough. We were always with family, relatives. That was not good. So when we were there, we just kept to ourselves. We saw all the other people from the outside islands, and the girls were dancing *hula* and doing all kinds of things—playing the *'uke*. And here we are, so timid-looking, sitting there with our parents. (Laughs)
- WN: This is at Jerome?
- GH: This is on the train.
- WN: Oh, on the train.
- GH: On the train, we didn't socialize. And they were out there; they were so different. We thought, wow, look, they're so different from us. We never saw that. So that's how we learned, we grew, I guess. It was an experience for us, you know.
- WN: We can get to Jerome next.
- MK: Yeah. Shall we—yeah, shall we . . .

- WN: Well, I wanted to ask you. Did you ask about school—what was it like? Did we cover that?
- MK: Just very little. You mean, at Pu‘uhale [School]?
- WN: Yeah, at Pu‘uhale, you had to tell your teachers and your classmates that you were leaving. What do you remember about that?
- GH: I don’t know what we told her. I can’t remember, except I had to tell her that we had to go to the Mainland with my parents. And we don’t know where. But I can’t remember too much about it.
- WN: You don’t remember being sad or anything like that?
- GH: Yeah.
- WN: What about your friends and leaving your friends?
- GH: We didn’t have that many friends. (Laughs) I had a couple of good friends, but mainly, it’s cousins. Mainly, it was cousins. Yeah, I had two cousins in my class. (Chuckles)
- WN: Do you remember anything about how—you know, you said your mom had to get rid of things and so forth. Do you remember doing anything like that or helping her?
- GH: (Chuckles) I don’t remember any of that. I think she did almost everything herself. Of course, the aunties came and helped her.
- MK: And it was good that the family moved in. It was an uncle’s family that took over the house.
- GH: Yeah. All the sister-in-laws were there, so they probably helped her out and got ready. But I guess, in those days, nobody knew what it was like on the Mainland. So nobody could really help do things and tell her what to get, you know, clothing, like that.
- WN: Do you have any recollection of the first time you saw your father at the immigration station after all those months?
- GH: Yeah, I thought he looked kind of tired. He always was a very sociable guy, but I thought, oh, he looks kind of tired. He didn’t look the same, I thought. But I guess he was all right. He was kind of a bitter man throughout. He was kind of a bitter man because of that experience through the war. Each time, as the years went on, he changed. And so, for a long time—did you see the show *Farewell to Manzanar*?
- MK: Yeah.
- GH: He was like that. That man reminded me of my father, that man. You know, he was very bitter. My father was like that for a while. Then he changed. But he was a real fighter, so he did a lot of things in camp. So anyway.
- WN: We’ll get to it the next time.
- GH: Yeah, kind of a long, extended . . .
- MK: This is great.
- WN: I know, but this is really interesting . . .
- GH: I hope it didn’t go too long.

MK: No, no, no. This is what we would want. The thing is that—like when Denshō came to interview you, maybe they didn't ask that much about the prewar days. But for us, it's real important—we think it's real important—to know what it was like for you before the war. Because only that way, you can measure how the war really affected you and your family, right? And the big changes you went through.

GH: But the thing is, it's hard to remember.

MK: But you're doing good.

WN: Yeah.

GH: To remember before the war is . . .

WN: You're doing fine.

MK: You're doing really well. You were what, a fifth-grader, and yet, you're remembering all this. And like you said, there's a difference. Even one year, fifth-grader, sixth-grader, even if you're in the same family, siblings will have different memories.

GH: That's why when we talk about it—and you know what else, I have suggested. I said, "Why don't we all put it down and write down all our (memories)." But nobody wanted to. But one sister above me—one year older than me—her memory is just fantastic. She remembers it. And I said, "It's too bad they don't interview her." And she never did. She testified once on the reparation (hearing in LA), but otherwise, her memory—she can go all the way back before we even started going to school!

WN: Really, and this is the one that's living in LA?

GH: (Visalia, near Fresno.)

WN: Okay, so this is the one Denshō went to interview her?

GH: (No), the one in LA is the activist one. That's in LA. (She is) living in the condo.

WN: Oh, I see. And that's the one Denshō interviewed?

GH: Yeah, because she was more well known. But the other one never had any interviews.

MK: We need to get your other sister, yeah?

WN: Okay, well, let me turn this off.

GH: It's just that she has such a good memory.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 57-5-2-12

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Grace Hawley (GH)

Hawai'i Kai, O'ahu

January 23, 2012

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN) and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

MK: Like what were your thoughts or first impressions when you got to Jerome?

GH: Gee, I really have to think about this.

MK: Mm-hmm [yes], you can take your time.

GH: It was a little scary not knowing what we were getting into, what the conditions would be. But I remember it was cold, very cold—January—and wet. I think either rainy or something. I seem to remember it was very cold and wet. And surprisingly, our doctor was there to greet us because he was in that camp.

MK: And who was your doctor?

GH: Dr. [Kazuo] Miyamoto. And so he was there in that group that was there before us because we were the second (group). So there were a few people there. And then, we were taken to the barrack. They said, "This is where you're going to live." And so, I don't have too many recollections of details. I guess at that age, I didn't bother too much. So . . .

MK: What do you remember about your mother and father, and how they seemed to be reacting to the whole situation?

GH: I can't remember that much. I really can't. Maybe I wasn't listening to everything; I wasn't observing that much. But I was eleven, huh?

MK: You were young.

GH: I guess I was eleven. And I was the youngest. Pretty irresponsible. (GH and MK laugh.) So, you know, I wasn't too concerned, I think, at that age.

MK: And you know, when you folks first arrived, like you said, it was cold, . . .

GH: Dismal.

MK: . . . wet. Were you folks prepared for that kind of conditions?

GH: No, no. My mother had to—she had gotten sweaters. Maybe she thought they were heavy sweaters, but that's about all we had. We didn't have heavy clothing because we had no idea where we were going. We had no idea what we needed. So whatever my mother got for cold weather, I guess even she didn't know. Because in those days, people didn't go to the Mainland, you know. And Hawai'i wasn't prepared. The stores never had anything warm. So I don't know. She sewed a lot of things for us, but they were nothing. When we got there, it was just so cold, we had to order things. We had to order from the catalog right away, I guess. (Chuckles) I can't remember all of that.

- MK: And then, you know, you mentioned that you folks were like the second group that got there. So was the first group helpful in any way, since they were there first?
- GH: I think so. But the thing is, our block—it was Block 39—39 and 38, I think, was our group. It's all Hawaiian group. Thirty-eight, 39, 40 were Hawai'i people. Forty is where Dr. Miyamoto, Nakanos—they were already there. And then, so those were the people who were there and greeted us. And then, 39 was completely our group. So it was like, you know, a vacant block with all barracks in there. And we're all starting out like pioneers, you know, starting from scratch. So 39 and 38—I'm pretty sure 38, too, you know—it was all our group.
- MK: And at the time, when you folks first arrived, besides Dr. Miyamoto and his family, were there other families that your family knew?
- GH: My father—there was one family, I remember. One family who greeted us, he used to work for my father (before the war) at the bakery. And he moved to California and came to camp. He was in camp. I guess they had a manifest or something they looked at for the names, and he knew we were going to be there. So he came to greet us. My father was so surprised to see him. Yeah, so that was one. And then Nakanos, they knew the Nakanos. And (who) else besides Dr. Miyamoto? I don't know if he knew anybody else.
- MK: And as a child, what did you think about the barracks? First time.
- GH: Oh, yeah, it was real dismal though. Just the thought of going to live in there—two rooms, we had, because our family was big. If it's a small family, only have one room to live in. And with that potbellied stove in the center, and that's where you're going to burn—over there was wood. Yeah, they had to burn wood, firewood. It's just one room. And thin [walls], used to be—I don't think they had—it was tarpaper. I'm not sure whether they added more insulation later, or the people did it, or what, you know. But it was a real, you know, basic—it's almost like the military, you know. But they had, I guess, one long room in the barrack. And ours was divided into so many—one barrack had about one, two, three, four, five—maybe about six units. We were in the center because had two rooms. And they put a door in between so that we can go in or out. And then the end, for a couple, maybe, little smaller one. So anyway, that's how it was. Then there was a mess hall. There was a community laundry and the bathhouse. All of that. The ladies used to sew curtains because there were no curtains for the bathtubs, bathroom, all of that. So the ladies were doing all of those things. So there were a lot of things that they have to do on their own because the government wasn't going to do it. They just gave it barebones, you know, and from there on, it's how livable people made it.
- MK: So in the beginning, when you first went into your living quarters, what was there?
- GH: We had those army blankets for our blankets.
- MK: Uh-huh [yes].
- GH: And the beds were—I forgot what the beds were. Cots or no? I think they had a metal railing. Metal—what do you call that? Anyway, I think that's what it was. But we had army blankets. So I mean, there were a lot of things we had to buy, but we had to do with whatever we had because it was so cold.
- MK: So in those early days, where would you folks buy things from?
- GH: Catalog. The lady would come, and we would sit there—I remember, I used to tag along with my mother all the time and ask her to buy me things. I never know what happened to the others. They didn't used to go.

(Laughter)

- I used to always be with her, asking her to buy things, you know. Montgomery Ward and Sears. They would come and take all the orders. That's when she had to buy all these things. It's a good thing she was able to do it because a lot of the people—the farmers—they couldn't buy. There was a (store). They called a canteen. It was the camp store where you buy real basic [items], and they used to sell those pea jackets. They're all cheaper, you know, everything, for the people who really couldn't afford much. So they had those things. They had snacks, things like that. So it was more for the people who don't order from the catalog.
- MK: And then, in the beginning, like you were saying, your mom could afford it. She could afford to order. At that time, where did your mom and dad have their money from?
- GH: From the bakery.
- MK: From the bakery. So . . .
- GH: I think they had some income. Either they brought with them some—they had to bring some money, I guess. They can't go empty-handed. See, those things, I never paid attention to. But I had his records from the archives. And (there) I found out a lot of things. I learned more from reading all of that. Oh, he had a thick file. (Chuckles) Because interrogation and all of that, you know. A lot of it was repetitious in there, I noticed. But things that I didn't know about, I found out in there.
- MK: And just for clarification, like how many—who went to camp with you? Your family, who—like your sister . . .
- GH: All of us, the whole family. Oh, when we went to camp, all the families there, they were all together. The ones like Pat [Nomura], you know, their father was in another camp already. And there were those people who didn't have their father with them. They kept another camp, like Texas, New Mexico—you know, all those places—with only men. There were some of (the) Buddhist priests, principals—Japanese school principals—and like Pat's father. I don't know the category, but anyway, eventually, some of them came back and came to live with (their) family.
- MK: So in your case, all of you went.
- GH: Ours was the whole family. Uh-huh [yes]. Because the men—ours, and like a lot of the other families from Sand Island, we met at immigration station, and we all went on board together. So that's when all the families rejoined. So most families were together. There weren't that many without the father.
- MK: And you know, this is like the first time you're on the Mainland. And you see *hakujin*.
- GH: Mm-hmm [yes].
- MK: How---what were your thoughts about that?
- GH: It didn't bother me so much, but it's the black people. We only heard about it. Colored, huh, they called them. And the first time I saw (them), and I saw the shacks they lived in from the train as we reached South. I always remember that though. Those things (are) always in my memory. Poor-looking people, just standing there barefoot (so) cold (and) shabby-looking. What a life, you know, just watching the train go by like that. I always remember that scene. But the *hakujin* people, they're all the military that guarded us. So I suppose we saw some in Hawai'i, huh? (Chuckles)
- MK: So not that unusual.
- GH: Yeah, uh-huh.
- MK: Well, what was it like for you as a little kid to be in a camp and to have guards about the place?

- GH: Well, I don't know. I didn't pay that much attention to it. I hate to say it, but my sister who's only one year older than me (chuckles) remembers all that. She remember a lot more about that, you know. It was very traumatic for her that she didn't want to talk about it for a long time. For me, it's like, how can we be only one year apart, and how can I be so oblivious, huh? Funny, yeah? I guess I was very immature. (WN chuckles.) To think, only one year younger, yeah.
- WN: Well, everybody has different perspectives . . .
- MK: Yeah.
- GH: Yeah, I suppose so.
- WN: . . . on how they're viewing the world at that time.
- GH: Mm-hmm [yes].
- MK: Well, maybe, you know, you were sort of protected, maybe, by your mom.
- GH: Yeah, in some ways, I was always with her, you know. So maybe, I don't know. But she never talked very much. She was always very quiet. But I felt sorry for her because my father was always busy doing things and making these little speeches and (announcements). So I always stayed with her because she (was) always left alone. When we go to eat in the mess hall, I used to go with them. But you see, that's where families all started to—they lost a lot of their values because in camp (the kids) go with their friends. All scattered. They go and eat with their friends. I was the only one that stayed with my mother because I was young. I was too young to go eat with my friends. (Chuckles) I always stayed with them. But the rest of them never ate with us, already, from the time we were in camp.
- WN: And prior to going to camp, you all ate together . . .
- GH: Oh, we always ate together.
- WN: . . . as a family.
- GH: That's the real important one that most families noticed. Parents noticed (it) and it really affected them. They felt that, you know, their family values changed from then. Because, (the kids) started to do things on their own. And what other kind of things? But I know I—young as I was and not very responsible, but I used to always feel sorry for my mother. (Father) was the block manager. They had to have a manager to oversee the block. He always had things to do, and to make announcements and, you know, all that kind of stuff. And so, she's always by herself. But the others were nowhere. I mean, they were all with their friends. So eventually, I mean, they made friends, that's why. The young people all did that. They all just got together and used to eat together. So. . .
- MK: Yeah, that's a big difference . . .
- GH: Oh, yes.
- MK: . . . from what you were used to.
- GH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes].
- WN: So at mealtime, it was like you and your mother eating at the mess hall.
- GH: Mm-hmm [yes].
- WN: Did your mother have any friends?

- GH: (She) made friends—the ladies made friends. She knew Dr. Miyamoto's wife. One trip, they went to Little Rock. Overnight, I think, with the ladies. She could do it. My father couldn't. He couldn't get a pass. But my mother did. And so, the ladies got together, and they went to Little Rock. (Laughs) It was going to the big city . . .
- WN: Big city, yeah.
- GH: So that was nice. And one time, she let me out of school, and she took me to some hick town, (McGee). Oh, what was that? You know, there, all hick towns. They're so small, but you'd call it a town. And she said, "Oh, we're going to go to town, and we'll do some shopping. So you stay home, don't go to school." (Laughs) So she used to take me, only me. And that's when we found out—I think I mentioned it the last time, about segregation?
- MK: No, no.
- GH: In the bus? We got in the bus, and colored in the rear, huh. We're standing there—we don't know what to do. He goes, "Stay here." The bus driver can't stand it because what can he tell us? We're not black, and we're not white. So we don't go in the rear. So he said, "Stay here." So we stayed there. We get off the bus, and then, the public bathrooms—colored and white. So we knew, we're not going to the colored section, since in the bus, that's how we figured it out, you know. But that's the first time in my life that I saw real segregation. And in those days, I think they couldn't even walk on the same side of the sidewalk. I think they had to walk on one side of the street. So that was an experience. But at that time, the white people—I guess they thought we just looked strange. Some of them never saw Oriental people. So some of them would stare at us, but some didn't pay attention. So you know, we weren't mistreated, except there were places where they said they don't serve "Japs". They have signs, "We don't serve Japs." We found that in Wyoming. Mm-hmm [yes]. They put signs in a window.
- WN: So you saw that more in Wyoming than you did in Jerome?
- GH: Yeah. It seemed Wyoming, there's more bigotry than the South because the South, there's more (concentration) on black people.
- WN: I see.
- GH: So it's between colored and white. And they considered us kind of in between there. (Chuckles) They don't know where to put us. And some of them never saw Orientals (before). When we were living in St. Paul, they never saw Japanese people. They couldn't figure out what we were. Because there were a lot of blacks, there were Spanish, but only one Japanese girl in the whole school. Then we came. So that made us—three of us—and the Japanese girl in the whole school—high school. But I think in the South, their discrimination is towards black.
- WN: Right, right.
- GH: So it was different. (In) Wyoming—what do you call that—it's more the white people, they're ignorant. And they say, the more ignorant, the more biased, the more discrimination you see. That's how they were, is that they were really ignorant people. A lot of the guards, they said couldn't even read or write. They just put them there because they knew that it's security. They don't have to worry about security. They won't tell us, but you know, that's why they put those ignorant ones there, who couldn't even read or write.
- But in Wyoming, I remember my sister went out with her friends for the day. They had (a) pass to go out. And they were waiting for service at this soda fountain, and nobody waited on them. And then, finally, on the menu, it says, "We don't serve Japs." They didn't see that. But nobody would come and tell them that. The girls just ignored them. So they sat there like fools, you know? So they walked out of there, and then they saw in the window (a sign saying), "We don't serve Japs." But that's how a lot of them treated you. They don't say anything. They just ignore you like you're invisible or something.

MK: And you know, when you mentioned that you would get passes to go out.

GH: Mm-hmm [yes].

MK: To go to Little Rock or to a small town or elsewhere, were there any restrictions placed on you folks while on pass?

GH: I think, if I recall, we just had to be back the same day. Like when my mother went, they had a special overnight kind. But otherwise, it's just a day pass. Probably, we just go and come back by the afternoon or something.

MK: And without an escort or guard or anything?

GH: No. There's the bus that comes right there, outside of the camp. And I think, usually, there's a group of people going. Yeah, so we just kind of walk around the town. (Chuckles) I don't know.

WN: And you said that your father couldn't get one.

GH: He couldn't get one.

WN: So your father was in a sort of different category?

GH: Yeah, I still don't know why. And I remember when my brother was in Chicago and was going to be drafted in Chicago. Because (after) high school, he went out—he left the camp. Usually the kids did that. And they go to school (or work). Well, he knew he was going to be drafted. So he said, "Well, I might as well leave camp."

He went out, and eventually, he thought he would go to school or work or something. But he got drafted. My father went to the administration, and he told them, "How could you draft him?" That's when my father didn't have a pass yet. He said, "You don't trust his father, how could you trust him?" So, he made a real big fuss about it. And so, he told us, this is his chance. That's when I think they gave him his pass.

MK: Oh.

GH: Really, yeah? Because they wanted to draft my brother. So he went into the service. And my father, when he got his pass—that's the first time he could (go outside). Then they used to go to Yellowstone, fishing. And there was one family in Montana, farmers—Japanese family. They never went to camp. They lived in Montana, so they never saw so many Japanese. He invited them over to camp one time. They came over, all daughters.

MK: Uh-huh [yes]. (Chuckles)

GH: All daughters, they all worked on a farm. Drive tractors and everything. It was a really interesting family. But anyway, they never went to camp. So for them, it was an eye-opener to come to camp and see so many Japanese people. They were like *haole* people, you know, the way they lived because they always lived like that on the farm. And so, they invited my sister and my brother to come to the farm and stay with them. So they stayed there a few days, I don't know how long, but my brother (laughs) was not cut out for the farm. He said he's never going to go back there.

(Laughter)

You know, they had to get up early. They take them out to the farm and they helped them and all of that. He didn't like it. My sister, too, I think. But what an experience they had. It was so nice of them though, you know, when they—I don't know how my father met them. But we met them in Chicago years later, you know. The girls moved to Chicago when we were in Chicago—interesting, yeah?

MK: Yeah. And then, you know, earlier you mentioned that your father was a block warden.

GH: Block manager.

MK: Block manager. What did he do as a block manager?

GH: Well, each block had to have a manager. Each block had to have a manager, and they have to be in touch—they were kind of like intermediaries between the administration. Administration is where they had all the offices from Washington D.C., they send their people. These are all white people (who) run the camp. And then, so they let the managers know what's happening and any changes in the rules or whatever. Then the manager contacts them, too, to let them know what's happening and any improvements and make suggestions. He did a lot of that with the food. He suggested changes to the food and all that. Those are the things they do. They try and get things for their people and try to help the people in camp and improve conditions.

MK: And then, was it a position that he applied to be . . .

GH: No.

MK: . . . or he was selected . . .

GH: No.

MK: How does it work?

GH: I don't know why, but somehow, the people know certain people are leaders, yeah? Maybe. So they selected him. The people in the group—in the camp, within the block—they select their manager. Then, he appoints his assistant. And he had a secretary, too. So he had an assistant who wanted to be the manager. (MK chuckles.) You know, there's always those people. He [GH's father] didn't want to be the manager because it's a lot of work, but the people wanted him to be the manager because he speaks up, too—you know. And they knew he would fight for them and all that. So he had an assistant, and then he had a secretary. She was really good. They had a lot of things to do though, because it was a brand-new block, starting from scratch, you know. And with no experience, really, if you think about it, where does he begin? But somehow, they made it through, and the people's needs and all that, too, yeah, he had to go through all of that.

And winter, you know. A good example is like firewood in the winter. It's winter already when we got there. We needed firewood. See, Jerome was surrounded by the forest. It was forest—all forest and swamp (and a) river. So in the winter, the men have to go into the forest and cut firewood. That was our heat source. So (he) would say, "Okay, all the men. . . ." You know, people have to work collectively, when you're in a group like that. So he announced that, "Okay, we're going to go tomorrow morning," or whatever, "and all the men have to meet in the morning, and we're going to go and collect firewood." They have to chop down trees and all of that. It's a lot of physical work. So anyway, labor, too. When the men come back, the ladies will help. Because when they cut the wood, the ladies have to stack it, and they have to divide it. Each family gets allocated so much. So everybody (have) to work together.

And some families—this one family—I can't name names. This one family, the man would not come out. He thinks he's above everybody. He used to be an executive. My father said, "I used to do a lot of things in my past in Hawai'i." He says, "But I'm not going to do that to my people." He says, "I'm going to go out there and work with all the men." But this guy would not come out. He wouldn't even come out to eat in the mess hall. His wife would bring home food for him. Terrible, yeah? So anyway, he didn't come out. So his poor wife, she feels so bad, huh. So she would try to work twice as hard. But she can't make up for the man. She would have to do the ladies' job. They finally ousted that family from our block. The people complained, and they weren't happy because he wasn't putting in his share. That's how everybody pitched in. Because he had a family of five, and he wouldn't go out there and cut firewood, but they wanted their share. And so everybody had to put in their share of work. Finally, the people talked it over and said they want to get him out of that block. They don't want him. So anyway,

they moved them to another block. I don't know how they did it, but they moved him. But that's a good example, you know. So people did that.

First thing they had to do was assign jobs. Who has any background in cooking? They had the chefs for the kitchen to do the cooking. Because this is barebones now, you know. They needed waitresses. And then they need dishwashers. They also need help in the—maintenance, where they need the janitors, janitress for bathrooms and all that. So he had to do all of those things. They had to hire people. They have to ask for volunteers—who wants to do this. . . . They get paid. The minimum was, I think it was twelve dollars a month? Then it went to sixteen dollars a month, the next category. Nineteen dollars a month was the highest—block managers, doctors, dentists. They had a hospital built. (There were) doctors—(and) nurses. Anybody with background, like teachers. That's how they got the teachers. Whoever taught, they were going to teach. Any shortage, they would hire from the outside. So we did have some *haole* teachers. They were very nice because they have to be, yeah, to work in camp. Because they have to live in camp now. They have to live on the outskirts. They had housing for the administrative offices. All the people from Washington and the schoolteachers, people who worked in the camp. Their children had to go to school with us. I give them credit though, you know, those people. They did it. They didn't have to, yeah.

MK: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes]. And then, you know, in your family, how many of you worked? Like your dad was block manager.

GH: Only he worked.

MK: Only he . . .

GH: Because we were going to school.

MK: How about your mom?

GH: No, she didn't work. Some ladies did janitress, some worked in the kitchen—kitchen helpers, and some worked waiting on the tables. Because they still—it's a big mess hall—they still needed some, waiting. Other than that—then, the rest were all [from] outside, you know, the schoolteachers, and nurses, and all that.

MK: And then, what do you remember about the food? You were saying that that's one of the things your father had to deal with.

GH: At first it was not very palatable. (Laughs) You know, because they didn't care. They didn't care what we ate, whether we liked it or not. So the fish—first of all, he said the fish—the Japanese people liked to eat tuna. He said, "The kind of fish you give us is tasteless, but you can save money because tuna is cheap." He figured it all out. He said, "Tuna is cheap. The people would like it. So why don't you do that?" He said, "You would be saving yourself some money, and you would be doing us a favor." So they changed it to tuna. Then, they're able to get some sashimi out of that, too.

WN: Oh, wow.

GH: Mm-hmm [yes]. But oh, the people appreciated that so much. And rice instead of potatoes. At first, it was all potatoes. So other than that, I don't know what other things that he did. I didn't pay too much attention. But I remember that. The people were really, really so happy because it's hard (to) try eat that bland fish—whatever they had, you know. And the way they cook it, they don't care. They don't teach these people how to cook that kind of fish. Japanese people, we know they all have their own style, huh. But if you don't have the right food, how can you cook for Japanese?

WN: So do you remember condiments, like *shōyu*?

GH: We got all those things. I don't know how he got it, but we got all those things.

MK: And let's see. . . . We've heard that like Jerome is like in this forested area, swamp.

GH: Mm-hmm [yes].

MK: How did that kind of environment affect you?

GH: Well, we're not—the camp, I mean the barracks, are not in there. It's surrounded. It's on outskirts around the camp, so we don't see all of that. It's when the men go out, there were snakes. Because when they go out to get lumber, oh, there were snakes because they come out from the forest. There were the water snakes, too, because there was the river and swampy, huh. Oh, it was dangerous, you know, the snakes. These people now, they come from Hawai'i, they don't know how to handle those things. They sure learned. But there were some fun things. There were fireflies. See, things that we never had in Hawai'i. Fireflies, you know, in the summer. I see that in Korean movies.

MK: Mm-hmm [yes].

GH: They're flying around. It's so cute, you know. So we all get our jars with the cover, and we would catch fireflies at night. We would go out to the—there's a lot of empty fields out there with wild flowers in the spring, yeah. The fireflies are flying around, and we would catch them and just look at the lights. (Chuckles) Cute, you know, to see the lights flying in there. And let them go after a while. But we used to do those kinds of things. Some things, you just have to find your own recreation. And wild flowers. But people were—there were a lot of farmers. So in fact, in certain areas, it seems like Jerome, I think, had people from Fresno—farming areas.

MK: Mm-hmm [yes].

GH: And so, they grew flowers (and) vegetables in front or behind (their) unit. So pretty, all the flowers, because we never saw bulbs (before), you know, because of the weather, huh. In spring, they all would be blooming. My father used to plant some portulacas. He used to plant (them). He never did those things before, but he planted those. It turned out, he liked flowers. And they used to have vegetables.

And I remember, Camp Shelby, where 442nd boys were. My father's secretary at the bakery, the secretary or bookkeeper, her brother was (an) officer in the army at 442. Because he was a lawyer, I think, and he had a nice position. And so, he came out (to visit). My father invited them over, and they made—usually, what they do is, when they invite people over, they go to the mess hall and ask the cook for extra rice. Extra rice because we're not going to eat here today. We're not going to eat, so there's more food for the others. But we want extra rice, and they would—on the border of the camp, they used to have chicken farmers—they would sell fresh chicken. Watermelon, too, they used to do that in the summer. And so, they would buy chicken. They found out all these things, you know. He would buy chicken, and my mother would make chicken *hekka*.

MK: Oh!

GH: And they would grow their own vegetables.

MK: Mm-hmm [yes].

GH: They would have green onion and stuff like that. So, they would make chicken *hekka* for the boys because they never get to eat those things (at Camp Shelby). That's what they used to do. Whenever he invites anybody, they used to make chicken *hekka*. (MK chuckles.) They'd put tables together, whatever, and chairs. They would eat in the room in our barracks. Somehow they make do, you know, and they manage to do that.

MK: You know, I was wondering, when you folks were in camp, how much communication did you have with like people back home in Hawai'i or elsewhere?

GH: Well, my teacher told me, when I left, she said to write to them. She said, "I will tell them where you are, I will show them on the map." So I did, I wrote to them. I wrote to the class, and they would write back to me. Individuals would write back to me. My cousin was in my class. You know, we always had relatives. (Chuckles) We all had a cousin each, I think. Each one of us had one. I had two cousins, in fact, that time. But she and I used to walk to school together, and we were the same age, so. Anyway, I used to write to her a lot. I don't think she saved those letters. (Till today) we still talk to each other. But anyway, so the teacher would put the map up and tell them where I am because nobody knows where Arkansas is. In those days, we don't go to the Mainland. Except I knew the states—I knew the capitals. I remember that. I knew all that, the names. So, at least I knew. But she had to show them where I was, in relation, you know, to Arkansas and all that. I used to write to them, and they used to write back to me. I would write to the class, and each one—whoever wanted to—would write back to me. My sister did that, too.

MK: And like, were your parents also communicating with . . .

GH: My uncles . . .

MK: . . . anybody back home?

GH: Yeah, my uncles. My father—I think he had his secretary do it for him. But my mother never wrote. As I grew up, she made me write all her letters. Funny, yeah. She made me—she never wrote because she used to say she didn't have enough education. She knew what she wanted to say. She would say, oh, write to Auntie so-and-so, would you tell her this, that. So, I think her brother—I think I wrote to her brother at that time, when we were in camp. And then, the other—my father's side—he was in touch. When I went through the archives, I can see that he was in touch with them a lot through the attorney and through his accountant because he was trying to get allowance every month from the bakery account. He had to go through all the steps. And so, my uncle was the one that had to be kind of intermediary there. So that's how he kept in touch. All through, it was that.

MK: And then, so during the time the family was in camp, your father was aware of what was happening with the business back home?

GH: Oh yeah, because they always let him know what was happening—how bad it was. Did I tell you that the government was going to auction the bakery?

MK: You know, I think you may have mentioned it off-tape, but if you could tell us now about that.

GH: I don't remember the dates, you know.

MK: Yeah.

GH: I think it's either (when) the war was ending, or maybe when the war ended. But the government was going to auction off the bakery. I don't know for what reason or with what rights they had, but this is when already the bakery was going downhill because of the war. And so, my father said, "We can't let them do that." Because my grandfather would never hear of it. Well, he was in Japan.

MK: Yeah.

GH: They said, "We can't let it go like that." So you know, they had to scrape up \$65,000, and they bought it back. Imagine, yeah? It was really going downhill already. It was like buying back a losing business. But they said they couldn't let it go and let the government take it over. So they bought it, and they paid \$65,000 in those days. This was back in the '40s, you know. So you know, that was a lot of money, yeah?

WN: Yeah.

- GH: I don't know where they got that much money, but anyway, that's what they did.
- MK: Boy, your father really faced a lot of worries, yeah?
- GH: Yeah.
- MK: Let's see now. You know, you mentioned that when you were at Jerome, you had sixth and seventh grade there.
- GH: Mm-hmm [yes].
- MK: So what was that like for you? What was the school like?
- GH: I wasn't happy in school. (Laughs) I wasn't happy in school because when we went there, (I was) in the sixth grade. And we were starting late, after the other kids were already there. Because we were mid-semester, January. I remember, I went (to school) with Dr. Miyamoto's daughter. She picked me up, and we went to school because she was my age. She already started because they were there before me. But even if it was one or two months before us, I really felt like an outsider. And I met a few people, but—and then, too, that's already—sixth grade was going to be over in a few months. So before you know it, we're going to have graduation or whatever it was. So I remember my mother sewed me a dress for graduation.

And then I was going to junior high, seventh grade already. Then, that summer, I got sick. I had, supposedly—I don't think I did, but—supposedly, they thought I had malaria. It was not impossible thing because of camp. You know, mosquitoes and all of that. There were a lot of mosquitoes. And so, I was in a hospital for three weeks. When school started, I couldn't go to school. I was in the hospital (since) late summer. In fact, I had to be in isolation ward. Only my mother came to see me. The others couldn't come and see me because I guess they didn't know enough about it. So they were afraid. They thought it might be contagious or whatever. So I was there for three weeks.

Then, by the time I came out, school started. Here I was, a new student again. (Chuckles) I couldn't stand to be a new student. So I really didn't make too many friends. I remember I studied really hard because that's what you have to do when you don't have friends. (Laughs) I remember, my mother went to the (PTA) meeting. They had a PTA meeting, and she went. A lot of the mothers couldn't go because they couldn't speak English. You know, farmers and immigrant parents. So the teacher was so happy to see her, and she said that I did really, really good in school. You know, she was a *haole* teacher. I still remember, she was a nice, nice teacher. But I studied hard, so she was nice. That's how teachers are, yeah? (MK laughs.) Yeah. But that was the only teacher I was so happy with. But the rest of the time, I was never good in sports. I hated P.E.

And so, seventh grade was over, then summer after that (after a year and a half) we were going to move again. We were going to Heart Mountain [Relocation Center in Wyoming]. See, so I never made any attachments, I had never had good friends in Jerome (except) the people we lived with in that block. That's how Pat and I used to play together. She was younger than me, and I used to draw pictures for her. I used to draw paper dolls. (Laughs) She always remembers, she goes, "You used to make paper doll dresses for me." She was a few years younger than me, and they were living right across us. Their barrack was right across. She was closest to my age. Her sister, Marian, was about one year older than my sister Lillian. They were good friends. So they used to go out together. In fact, Marian used to go out with Bert. And Lillian used to go out with another guy. (MK laughs.) I used to eavesdrop, and I used to watch. They used to practice their dance and all that—you know, jitterbug. I used to watch all those things because I was too young in those days. (Chuckles)

- MK: So like for someone as young as you, what did you folks do for fun?
- GH: When I think about it now, I don't know what I did, yeah. Oh, there was—no, this was in Heart Mountain. In Jerome, I don't know what I did during summer. Well, the first

summer, I went to the hospital, yeah, later. So I don't know what I did, early part. But most of our social life was within our block. I don't know what I did.

MK: So like . . .

GH: It was boring.

MK: . . . Pat was there?

GH: Yeah.

MK: And there were some other girls, too, about your age?

GH: Yeah, we had some others. We had another family. And then, Arakawas. You heard about Arakawas? Where they had all daughters? They live on the Big Island now.

MK: Oh.

WN: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. The three daughters, yeah? Three sisters.

GH: Yeah. In fact, it's more than that because one lives on the Mainland. And the parent—the father was an architect. And he was a well—he was a successful architect.

MK: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

GH: And I think some of the daughters are architects, too, now. Anyway, none of them got married. Unusual, yeah? None of them got married. And so, they were all tall. He was a tall man, and the wife was tall. The girls, there's one that was 5'9".

WN: Wow.

GH: She's 5'9", you know? So she was a lot of fun. I always remember her. She was a lot of fun. And then, there was one my age. We didn't get along too well, and—kind of bossy kind, you know? (MK laughs.) The youngest one is living on the Mainland (and the only one that married). What happened is the father had this land on the Big Island (where they came from). They lived in Chicago for a long time. Then, they moved to California. After the parents were gone, they built a house on that land. So they decided, the three sisters are here now, (to move to) the Big Island [Hawai'i]. The three sisters. Because one, I think, is still on the Mainland—West Coast. And the youngest one is in California. And so, the other three are living (on the Big Island where) they built a house. And they came to our reunion. Our second reunion, I think. That's when we heard that they moved.

MK: You know, like Pat's family, originally from the Big Island. Arakawas from the Big Island. But like . . .

GH: Kuwahara. You heard of Kuwahara? They're from Big Island. He was optometrist from Big Island, too.

MK: Big Island. And then, like Dr. Miyamoto would be from Honolulu.

GH: Here, mm-hmm [yes].

MK: Your family's from Honolulu.

GH: Mm-hmm [yes].

MK: Where did most of the families come from?

GH: Mostly Honolulu.

MK: Mostly Honolulu?

GH: Mm-hmm [yes]. The outside island families. . . . I would say mostly Honolulu, yeah. There's mostly O'ahu. How about Yamasaki? Were you introduced to Yamasaki? They're Wai'anae. They were Wai'anae but not anymore now, you know. But we were good friends with them because they were our neighbor on the ship.

MK: Oh.

GH: And they had the younger girl—she was younger than me—and she was so cute, you know. She was so bored, nothing to do. Everybody's seasick, and she used to come over and talk to me and talk to us, you know. So we became good friends with that family because they were our neighboring (cabin and) we lived on the same block anyway. One of the girls was my sister Julia's classmate. Because there's always somebody with the same age, you know.

MK: So I guess as children, though, you folks could make friends, and you had things to do?

GH: We made friends in camp, I mean, within our block mostly. We became good friends.

MK: So basically, day to day, the boundaries of where you folks went, was basically about the block area?

GH: I guess so, yeah? I guess within the block.

MK: You know, when you look back on those days, how would you best describe it to someone? You know, what was it like?

GH: It's hard because I never really thought about it. Funny, huh, how you get used to it, day by day. You just make it. (Pause) I don't know. I can't say. I would have to say, when we went to Heart Mountain—a few years older. Maybe one or two years later, all I can remember is that it was boring. (Chuckles) It was boring because nothing to do. You know, I did go to the rec hall. There was a rec hall. We used to play Ping-Pong. I got a part-time job there to watch that hall because the lady hired me to do that (since) we used to go there all the time. But nothing to do. I remember, I used to walk blocks and blocks to see a girlfriend. We just—all we did was walk. Walk around. What can we do, you know? Nothing to do. You don't catch a bus. There's no---you don't ride. You walk everywhere. So really boring, yeah. I remember in Heart Mountain, we used to walk in the blizzard to go to school. Oh, so cold.

MK: You know, how come you folks went to Heart Mountain?

GH: My dad picked it. (Laughs) He picked it because he said he didn't want to go to Gila. Gila—Arizona—where a lot of the people from Hawai'i (went).

(Telephone rings. Interview stops, then resumes.)

GH: So, we were talking about . . .

MK: Yeah, why did your father want to go to Heart Mountain?

GH: Well, because at that time, a lot of families wanted to go to—they were going to close Jerome, huh, and they wanted to go to Gila because they said the weather is warmer. It's (in) Arizona. He says, "Well, it's like Hawai'i." He said, "It's like going back to Hawai'i." He said, "We're going to have that. . . ." You know, when you go back to Hawai'i, you're going to have warm weather all the time, so you need to experience something different. So he went the other extreme, and he picked Heart Mountain, which was the coldest spot. He could have picked Denver—there was Amache, in Colorado.

MK: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes].

GH: It's cold, too, but you know, he could have picked something else. But I think the choices were few. There weren't that many choices because they had to have openings. So he decided on Heart Mountain because he said he wanted to experience that kind of weather. And so, when he did that—you know, he used to—he befriended a lot of the *kibeis*. So, in Jerome, he looked after a lot of them. Some of them, you know, because they have no family, they wanted to follow him. So some of them came with us (laughs) to Heart Mountain. Poor guys had to come to Heart Mountain. (WN chuckles.)

MK: Oh, and still, when you folks went to Heart Mountain, the family was still intact?

GH: Oh yeah, mm-hmm. There weren't too many families that went with us to Heart Mountain.

WN: The rest went to—most of them went . . .

GH: They went to Gila.

WN: . . . to Gila River.

GH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes].

MK: How did you feel when your dad—you know, when you found out that you folks were going to move to Heart Mountain?

GH: Well, we already knew we had to move. There was talk. It didn't matter to us because we don't know the difference anyway. I mean, we don't know anybody wherever we go. It's just like going to another strange—at least this time, we knew it's going to be, you know, pretty much the camp life, it's going to be. So we already learned that. It's just meeting new people, so that didn't matter already. Yeah, I guess it was still kind of an adventure not knowing.

MK: But then, you'd probably be separated from . . .

GH: Can you pass me my glass of water?

MK: . . . some of your friends when you . . .

GH: I didn't have friends. I mean, camp friends, yeah, maybe Pat them.

MK: Yeah, yeah.

GH: But other than that—thank you. Other than that, I didn't have good friends outside of the block. But within the block, yeah, we were going to—oh, it was sad because, finally, you make friends. We got close because you know, when you live so close together, you become—it's a different kind of relationship. So it was sad. We had to leave all of them. A year and a half, you know, we were there.

MK: And I would think for the teenagers like who had boyfriends or girlfriends . . .

GH: Oh, you know, that—because young as I was, I knew. I knew about that. And I used to hear about it. Well, for one thing, my sister and her boyfriend—his family went to Tule Lake. Oh, that one was the worst. Bert always liked her, but she was going with this other guy. They went to Tule Lake, and so that's it. You just break up. You know, and when you're at that age—she was, what, junior in high school. He was older, I think. He was out of school. My brother, he didn't have any attachment. He just graduated in Jerome. But a lot of them, they met boys from 442. Then, they went overseas and got killed in action. What else did they have? And the (girls), you know, they had to just break up with the boys.

I guess that's part of life, huh. They adjust. Because here we were in Heart Mountain, and the next thing you know, my sister had all these guys chasing after her. (Laughs) She was

always popular with the boys—my oldest sister, Lillian. She was always very attractive. And so, the boys were after her. But then, they made new friends in Heart Mountain. They had a lot of good friends. We all lived, I think, pretty much in our block. They were all the same age, so she used to go out. She and my sister, Julia—we were all one year apart. She and Julia were closest in age, so they had more in common. They used to go to dances and all that. So they made friends with some other girls in the block. I did on the block because the *kibeis* knew I wanted to ride bike. (MK chuckles.) I still wanted to ride the bike. And I was still young.

MK: Yeah, yeah.

GH: Seventh grade though, that's very immature, yeah? So he said, "I know, my neighbor—she has a bike. I'll introduce you to her." So he took me over there, and I used to borrow her bike. We used to make friends that way. She was not very nice, but she had the bike, so I didn't care!

(Laughter)

And so, anyway, that's what I used to do. And then, finally, when my father got his pass, he took us to Montana. Billings was a big town then. That was it. He took us to Montana, and we had a—I don't know whether we stayed overnight or what—well, anyway, we had lunch at a hotel there. It was very nice. He said, "Okay, they all talked me into. . . ." letting me buy a bike. Because you know, before the war, he wouldn't think of it. See, that's how much he changed already. Broadened his mind, you know, being away and all of that. The experiences.

"Okay, then." So we walked all over town, looking for a bike. All the sporting good stores. And so—because they knew that that's all I do. Otherwise, what am I going to do. You know, "Poor thing, she's got no friends." (Laughs) So we walked and walked. You know, those days, wartime—you folks don't know—wartime, rubber shortage. They needed everything for military supplies. So rubber shortage. So tires (are) all skinny. Like nowadays, they're skinny.

WN: Uh-huh [yes], for racing.

GH: Yeah, but before, you don't want that kind of bike. You want the fat tires. And I looked (at) every one of them and said, "They don't have that type." They said they don't make them anymore like that. I said, "Dad, I don't want a bike." I don't want a bike. My friend who had hers, she brought it from California. So, I said, "I don't want the skinny tires." And it was hard to ride, you know.

MK: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes].

GH: You know, when you're not that good. So I finally gave up the idea. So we ended up with no bike. (Laughs) I still remember.

WN: Oh, that's a sad story.

GH: Yeah, and my father was going to give in, yeah, at (last!) They all talked him into it. (Chuckles)

MK: (Laughs) Oh, that's a story.

GH: I wonder if—I never saw anybody going to school on a bike. But I was just thinking, because we had to walk everywhere, that would have been nice, yeah? (Chuckles)

MK: Yeah, practical, yeah. And you know, I was curious, at Heart Mountain, were the barracks and living conditions just similar to what you had experienced earlier?

GH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes]. Yeah, it's pretty much—it's dryer because now, it's in the middle of the desert. (Chuckles) The other one was in the middle of the forest. This was

desert. We could hear the hyenas, you know. Coyotes and all that kind at night—because they're all outside of camp. It was hot. In the summer, it was hot, hot, hot. Real desert heat. If you go to a baseball game—we used to go watch them play baseball—the side that the sun is hitting can get faded, you know. That's how hot it was. So bad. It's a wonder we didn't get cancer, yeah, skin cancer. So hot.

But anyway, and winters were cold. Freezing, freezing cold. So when the river freezes up, then they go ice-skating. We couldn't ice skate because we didn't know how. We never did it before. (Chuckles) Slipping all over the place, you know. I finally gave up. (MK chuckles.) I think most of us gave up. Because Heart Mountain was mostly Mainland people, we had to get used to that. Not Hawai'i people, huh, because hardly any of them went with us.

MK: What was it like, then, kind of adjusting to . . .

GH: In school, we met kids from the Mainland. They were different. And at first, there was a lot of rivalry in Jerome between Hawai'i and Mainland people. There were some things that Hawai'i people—for one thing, it was speech. They used to make fun of us because of our accent. Because those days, a lot of pidgin was going on, so it was hard. We used to switch, you know. You know how we grew up—that's how we grew up is that we switch. When you have to speak good English—when you're speaking to your teacher, you speak good English. (Laughs) You switch from good English to pidgin. And so, it's hard to do that all the time. Mainland people, they speak so fluent, the way they speak, because that's how they grew up. So that was an adjustment. So they used to look down on us. They looked down on us, but financially, they were more poor because a lot of them were really, really poor farmers. Some of them were sharecroppers even, you know. So there were different social values, I guess.

And then, Hawai'i people were more—their personalities (are) different. They weren't as oppressed, I guess. You know, (Mainland) Japanese people were very, very much so, because they lived on the West Coast. So (their) personalities were very different. So that was another thing. An adjustment. They used to think Hawai'i people were kind of cocky and, you know, very confident and sure of themselves because my father felt the difference. They used to tell him, "Oh, Mr. Sugita, don't make waves," you know, all that. Because they're so used to doing that.

He said, "No, you have to speak up. If you want something, you have to speak up. He says, "Or they'll walk all over you."

And so, that's the difference with the Hawai'i mentality and the Mainland people. We found that out with the people there. The Mainland people were more serious and more reserved. Hawai'i people were more gregarious, I guess, I'd say. So eventually, they got adjusted and all that. That's what—from Camp Shelby, too, when they came out, they were all from Hawai'i. The boys were real different from the Mainland 442 boys.

MK: And like, your father, did he continue being something like . . .

GH: They wanted him to . . .

MK: . . . block manager?

GH: They wanted—you see, pass the word around, yeah?

MK: Mm-hmm [yes].

GH: So by the time we got to Heart Mountain, they were waiting for him to do some things already. He didn't want to be a block manager. He said he didn't want to be. Of course, the camp was already established. (Then they) wanted him to be a councilman. (Laughs) I don't know what it was. They had to do some things to help run the camp, too. But he always—he sang *naniwa-bushi*, too. So he entertained a lot. They used to have those shows to keep people (entertained)—especially the older people. (He directed a samurai play with the *kibeis* as actors.) In Jerome, they had *hula* dancers from Hawai'i group, and

they had singers. Same thing in Heart Mountain. They did that. There were *shamisen* players, so they would back him up with the *shamisen*. My sister was too young to play *shamisen*, in those days, yet. She played later on. So they used to do a lot of those things for entertainment.

Other than that, what else did they have? We had our rec center. We used to play Ping-Pong. But it was just—oh, and they had movies. They had movies. Yeah, I remember, I used to go with my mother. (Chuckles) I used to go with my mother to the movies.

WN: American movies?

GH: Yeah.

WN: Or Japanese?

GH: American. No, no Japanese movies. No Japanese movies.

MK: And then how was your mom faring? You know, by this time, she had been in camp at Jerome for . . .

GH: She was okay. I mean, she doesn't say too much, but in Jerome, they had so much time on their hands, she learned to knit. She (knitted) a two-piece outfit. (MK chuckles.) That's how much time she had. Two-piece outfit, you know, top and bottom, she knitted for herself. Imagine, yeah?

MK: Yeah.

GH: So they would sit with the ladies and do all those kinds of things. She used to like to sew. So I think she took her sewing machine with her, or she either bought one from Sears or something. But she used to sew because she used to sew our clothes, too. She still used to sew.

MK: And then for you at Heart Mountain, you were already eighth grade?

GH: Yeah, eighth grade. High school, almost. So eighth grade is when, you know, boys and all that. We started getting interested (chuckles) in boys. Eighth grade—I'm trying to think because here, we had to start again with new friends. I can only remember one or two friends I had that I got close to. This one girl—it was really a sad story because this one girl had so many brothers—big family. And I used to—she was a quiet girl—I used to go and stop by her place, and we would walk to school together. And then, she stopped going to school. I found out she got pregnant by one of her brothers. What a tragedy, yeah? She was a nice, sweet, quiet girl. But what can they do, yeah, in that kind of—you know, in that kind of surrounding that they were living. And boys, all teenagers. All in one room, all of them. The kids in one room, I guess. I don't know. But I don't know what happened to her after that. They just hushed it up, and I never knew anything. Sad, yeah, that kind. So there were stories like that.

And then, there were kids who want to go and be alone, you know. They're going out together. There's no place to go for privacy, so they used to out by the river and do things like that or go to the movies. But there was one kid—the Shoshone River. The Shoshone River is a pretty big river, and it runs through Heart Mountain. They used to always say that, "Don't go swimming there." Because it's dangerous. And it's deep. It's a big river. This one kid did, and he drowned. Oh, he didn't come home. So they all had to look (for him). And it was cold. The water was cold. They had to throw a rope all the way across. I don't know how they did it, but in that cold, cold water—you know how they have to hang onto the rope and look for the body? They finally found his body. He drowned. So you know, things like that happened.

But I don't know of any—anybody who tried to run away and get shot or anything like that. Only in Sand Island, they had an incident. But in camp, I don't remember anything like that. It's Tule Lake where they had all the rioting and things like that. There was a lot

of violence. But those are the kinds of things that happened. You know, it's—good and bad things happening.

MK: And you know, by then, you know, you have Japanese Americans serving in the military. You know, did you have a sense of what people in camp thought about Japanese Americans serving?

GH: No, we used to hear about it. We had camp newspapers. They would announce so-and-so was killed in action or missing in action. Parents, so sad. They would come and visit their parents. Some of them would come and visit. They had passes and all that. But I had a little bit of that feeling, but not enough yet, really. They never discussed that too much with us at home. Except my father's incident with my brother—that, I remember. My brother went out to Chicago after. He graduated (in) Jerome, so he went to Heart Mountain with us, and then he left. He left for Chicago. And when he went, I remember he said—I was teenager already. I was (an) eighth grader. That's when he said, "Oh, do you want me to get you anything in Chicago?"

I said, "I want autographed pictures of movie stars." (MK laughs.)

He used to do that for me. He always treated me—till he died, he always treated me like a little sister. My sister-in-law always says that, "You're always his little sister." (Chuckles)

So yeah, he used to get me things from Chicago.

MK: How did the family feel about your brother leaving to go to Chicago?

GH: Well, I guess it was kind of sad for my mother, especially. But you know, she never says very much. But she knew that, sooner or later, he would leave. Because what can you do in camp? See, when they get out of high school, there isn't anything else they can do. They can't continue education. High school is about the limit. So most of them went out. As long as they went to Midwest, they could go. They could resettle. So even like Pat's sister went into nursing, I think. They went to Minneapolis. So some families did. We had another family—my father's good friends—they went out. He was a successful businessman, but they went out into domestic life. He went out to somewhere in the Midwest and lived as a domestic couple—live-in kind. And then, saved enough and went out to Minneapolis and bought a restaurant.

But you know, people did all different kind of things. In our case, we couldn't go out. My father couldn't go out yet. (Chuckles) But they were starting to, you know. But at the time my brother went out, a lot of the kids were already leaving. After high school, they were leaving. Most of them went to Chicago or East. Minneapolis, Chicago were the popular places, and then further east, maybe. Not New York City so much. I don't know. So my brother and a friend—one of the *kibeis*—they became good friends.

MK: Mm-hmm [yes].

GH: He went with my brother. Of course, he could speak the most—his English was pretty good, compared to the others. So he went out with him.

MK: So like for you and your sisters, seeing your brother go off, is that what you thought would be happening to you eventually or. . . .

GH: Well, we knew that we weren't going to stay there much longer. Somehow, word was going around that, you know, the camps were going to close. That's why they're trying to get people to settle outside and encouraging people to settle. So I think we kind of knew that we weren't going to stay there too long. But my brother—I used to write to him, and he used to write to me (chuckles) when he was in Chicago. I don't know, we always thought we were going to go back to Hawai'i. As soon as we can, we're going to go back to Hawai'i.

MK: But when you folks were—when you left Heart Mountain, you folks ended up in St. Paul.

GH: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

MK: So how come?

GH: Because we couldn't come back. They wouldn't let us go home yet. My father couldn't—see, he still had a problem.

WN: Was the war still going on? Or I mean, . . .

GH: No, the war was over.

WN: So the war ended?

GH: The war—well, you know what, though, just as we were leaving, the war was ending. Because (the) atomic bomb was dropped in August.

WN: August '45.

GH: Either was before or after we were leaving camp—we were one of the last ones to leave. When we got to St. Paul, he got word that his brother was killed in (the) atomic bomb. His oldest brother. We just got to St. Paul when he got the telegram. So we were leaving camp. When we left, there were a lot of people who were gone already. Each time (it) was getting real empty. And all your friends—and that was sad because all our friends and the boys that we started to go out with or whatever, you know. We used to get together a lot with the boys. They used to come to the rec hall, we used to play Ping-Pong and all that. So pretty soon, we had to leave all of our friends again and go to a new place. On top of it, going to St. Paul is not camp. After being with all Japanese, we had to be among only white people. That was going to be an adjustment. A real trauma, you know, to make that kind of move. So we didn't know what to expect.

So camp—leaving Heart Mountain, I remembered that very clearly because we had to get on the bus to Montana. Then, from Montana, we get on the train. And on the train, to take us to St. Paul. At that time, my father and my sister and my brother, I think—I think my brother came back. . . . I forgot. I don't know all the details. But vaguely, either my father and my sister went out first because his friend in Minneapolis who had a restaurant, told my father that, "We'll find a place in St. Paul, and you can open one there because they're going to need one there. They don't have a Japanese restaurant." So he said okay.

So my father and my sister went to Minneapolis and stayed there a little while, to look it over and talk about it. So they came back, and he said, "We're going to St. Paul." They found a family who was selling their restaurant. They had a coffee shop type of restaurant. Not Japanese food. They're a Japanese family, you know, they lived in St. Paul. So he said, "I'm going to start a Japanese restaurant, and I'm going to get those guys from Fort Snelling to come out." Because Fort Snelling was very conveniently close. And that was the—what's the—language school.

WN: Yeah, MIS [Military Intelligence School].

MK: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes].

GH: And that's why a lot of them went to Washington, yeah. My brother-in-law was one of them. So anyway, he got word out there. He advertised, I guess, out there that he's got a Japanese restaurant, he's from Hawai'i. That's the thing that got them to—they wanted somebody from Hawai'i, and they were so homesick, you know. So the location was very convenient, so as soon as they come in, it was—"Seven Corners," they call it. Seven Corners, I still remember. Seven Corners is where all the out-of-town buses come in. They transfer to downtown, transfer to Minneapolis. So they called it, "Seven Corners" because that corner had all kinds. So they come in from Fort Snelling, right there, they can walk within a block to our restaurant. Oh, I tell you. They used to come in droves.

They even used to come on our day off, and they would knock on our door. My mother would let them in to eat *chazuke* because they feel so sorry for the boys (and) still want to feed them.

MK: So you actually lived at the site of the restaurant?

GH: No, we lived a block away in this—like a rooming house because all we did was go home (to) sleep. Because in the restaurant, there was a big cellar basement downstairs, and we did everything there. We practically lived there, except to go back to sleep. So we had—we used to take a bath there, we used to do our homework. After school, we'd come and go downstairs to do our homework there and then help at the restaurant. You know, so we practically lived at the restaurant.

MK: Oh, what was the restaurant's name?

GH: I forgot. Aloha-something.

MK: Oh yeah?

GH: He made sure he did something Hawaiian so they'd know. I forgot.

MK: Your dad's really *akamai*. (Laughs)

GH: Yeah, he's an entrepreneur.

WN: Do you remember what was on the menu, basically?

GH: Typical Japanese food. *Sukiyaki* and all those things. Egg *foo yung*, whatever, and spare ribs.

WN: Egg *foo yung*?

GH: Yeah, egg *foo yung*!

(Laughter)

Funny, Japanese-style egg *foo yung*. He always made that, that's why. He used to have this tuna can. I still remember. This tuna can, he opens it, both sides. And that was going to be the *foo yung*. That's the shape.

WN: Oh, put the egg inside and fry it so it's round.

MK: Oh.

GH: Yeah, so it's nice and round. That's what he used to do. He used to put three like that in a big pan with oil, that's how he made it. And he didn't know how to cook. My mother did almost all the cooking. Because later on, when we had a restaurant in Chicago, he learned how to make *tempura*. That's the only thing that he did real well. *Tempura*. But in St. Paul, my mother did all the cooking. And then . . .

MK: Who did the waitressing?

GH: My oldest sister, Lillian. She was out of school. She graduated in Heart Mountain. She graduated a year early. So she was out of school. And so, she used to do the waiting because (it's a) small restaurant. And at night, after school, I used to help wash the dishes. Two of us used to help with the dishes. My brother taught me how to cashier. He came over to see, you know. Oh, he was stationed in—it was really convenient, the way the timing was. When we moved to St. Paul, he was stationed in either West Virginia or one of those places in the east. So he could come back, you know. Close enough to come out. So, he came to help us out in the beginning, and he showed me how to cashier. How

to make change. I was only in the ninth grade at the time. But anyway, so I used to help wash dishes and all that. Then, we had this other *kibei* who was in Heart Mountain with us, and he didn't know where to go. He (asked) my father, "Where am I going?" when camp was closing. He said, "I have no family. Nowhere to go."

So my father said, "Okay, we're going to St. Paul. And if things are okay, (and) we can have the restaurant out there, you can come and stay with us. And you can work for me."

So I still remember, he didn't come with us because we went to the train station to meet him (when) he came later. He came to live with us. He was like our big brother. He was our dishwasher. (Laughs) I lost my job. He was our full-time dishwasher. I guess my father wanted to give him a job. And so, we used to practically live at the restaurant. We ate all our meals there. First thing in the morning, we'd go there and eat because my parents would go there and get ready and get all prepped, so, we'd go there. When we come home, we eat dinner there, and then we go home. So we practically lived there.

So we didn't make too many friends. I have to tell you that because when we were going to school, oh, we had a hard time adjusting. You know, the thing is, from camp, it (was a) complete (change). From all Japanese—if there was a little mixed, it's not bad—all Japanese, and then go into all white school. So the girl was—so the only girl, Japanese girl, was Sugita. We were Sugita. (Chuckles)

MK: Oh.

WN: But not related at all?

GH: No, no relation. They think all Japanese are Sugita.

(Laughter)

Isn't that something? And she lived there. She lived in St. Paul. She grew up in St. Paul. That's why she never was in camp. So she was well adjusted. There (were) some Japanese (in St. Paul). That restaurant that we bought from, they were Japanese people. So anyway, it was kind of interesting. But we could never adjust in school. The counselors would call us in. Because there were three of us going there. I was (in) high school. Ninth grade was high school already. She would say, "Why don't you join us for the hayride? And for social. . . ." We didn't join any of them. We just felt like outcasts. You know who used to be friendly with us, (are) the Spanish kids because they were minority. They could feel for us. They knew that we were like that already. They could sense that, huh. They lived on the other side of the bridge. They were poor, too. So we had the restaurant, and there was a bridge between. On the other side of the bridge, kind of like shantytown. They lived all over there. All Spanish people. They had their own little (section) but they were so nice (to us). In school, they would be friendly to us. And then the black kids, too. They were nice to us. All the minorities. Because they knew that we felt so out of place. We used to—the three of us—used to go to school together, meet for lunch, and come home together. We just never made friends. Never made friends. We had a hard time. Because the restaurant was there, too, and all we did was spend our time in the restaurant. So anyway, that was our life.

MK: And then, where you folks lived, were there other Japanese?

GH: No, where we lived was about a block away. It was just like a rooming house. All we did was go there to sleep. He was a Jewish man, and he was terrible. Stingy. Every time we go home, it's freezing. And then, it used to be the radiator—you know, the old days, they had radiator. He used to tell us, "Hit the radiator." Then he's downstairs, he said, "Then I can hear. If it's not working, you hit it, it go 'clank, clank, clank,'" like that. Then he said, "I'll hear it, and I'll turn it on." He was so stingy that he hardly turned it on. And you know, you walk into—in the winter—you walk into a cold room, it's freezing. We get home late, and here it is, it's freezing. We used to beg. We used to get so mad at him. He knows we're going to come home, and it's freezing in there. He comes running upstairs, "You don't have to make so much noise!"

(Chuckles) I still remember. We said, “Well, turn on the heater. You want us to freeze to death up here?” we used to say. It was just terrible. He was so stingy. He had a barbershop downstairs so he can see us coming home. He could just turn it on when he sees us because we’re going to go up the stairs—it’s upstairs. But he was so stingy, oh, I tell you. But that’s all we did, was sleep there. It was not home for us. The restaurant was like our home because we had the big basement, you know. Good thing we had that, and we took a nap and studied and did everything down there. So what a life, yeah? But we didn’t stay there too long.

MK: And how was business, though, for your dad?

GH: Oh, he did so well. (MK laughs.) The place was just packed with people, the boys. It’s all the Fort Snelling guys. It was just packed, continuous, you know. Finally, when we were leaving, who did he sell it to? I think he sold it to another Japanese family. Whether—how well they did, I don’t know. But the idea that they’re from Hawai‘i, too. So they knew that we were all four girls. They said, “Oh, all the daughters,” you know. Those days, they want to see girls. (WN chuckles.) But that’s how, when they used to come over, we got to meet a lot of them, too. Some of them were lonely, so we used to write. I remember one guy used to write all the time. Because they just want to get mail.

MK: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

GH: He said to write to him. So I used to write letters to him, too. All the way until I went back to Hawai‘i, I was writing to him. I mean, not a boyfriend, you know, just to write so he can get mail. (Laughs) Yeah. But I had another girlfriend I met. She was a little older than me. But she had a boyfriend in Fort Snelling. And I don’t know how I got to be friends with her. And she used to come over sometimes. That’s the only other Japanese girl I knew. She lived there though, in St. Paul, so that’s why—you know, when they live there, they’re adjusted already.

WN: I’m wondering, the Fort Snelling boys, do you remember them mostly being from Hawai‘i? Or was it just . . .

GH: Oh yeah, the ones that used to come over were from Hawai‘i. That’s why they used to come over—because we’re from Hawai‘i.

WN: What about the ones in the restaurant? Was it . . .

GH: At the restaurant?

WN: . . . combination of Hawai‘i boys and Mainland boys?

GH: Mostly Hawai‘i.

WN: Mostly Hawai‘i.

GH: Yeah, because—(in) Minneapolis, my father’s friend who had a restaurant—they’re Mainland people. He used to do good business, too. He had a bigger restaurant than ours. He used to have a lot of Mainland guys because they weren’t from Hawai‘i. The difference is that all the Hawai‘i boys wanted to come to our restaurant. And my brother-in-law—my sister married a Mainland boy eventually years later. And then, I said, “How come we never met you? You were in Fort Snelling, and we didn’t even meet you before?”

He said, “Because your place was all Hawai‘i guys.”

(Laughter)

“We didn’t used to go there,” he said. “We used to go to Minneapolis.”

So that’s how it was, I think.

- WN: Do you remember how different the two restaurants were in terms of food? I mean, was your father's restaurant more Hawai'i-kind food or anything like that?
- GH: I don't know what it was, yeah? But my mother was a good cook. So like theirs is a bigger restaurant, so they had a cook. They had a cook, and you know, they had a bigger operation.
- WN: How many tables, would you say, your restaurant was?
- GH: Oh, I don't know.
- WN: Or how many people, do you think, could it hold?
- GH: We had a counter and the tables. Maybe about six tables. Six, seven, eight tables—that's about it. Small.
- MK: And it was all Japanese food? No American?
- GH: Japanese food. I think, lunchtime, he used to make hamburger. I think he used to make hamburger, lunchtime—sandwiches.
- MK: Did you folks ever bake, having come from a bakery business?
- GH: No. My father never baked.
- MK: Oh, he didn't? He was a sales . . .
- WN: He was a businessman. (Laughs)
- MK: He was—yeah.
- GH: Yeah, yeah. But I remember, you know, those days, they had homeless (people). We didn't know that the guy was homeless. But you know, he comes in the restaurant, and I remember, one time, my father chased him out because he asked for ketchup. See, that's how they knew all those things. He asked for ketchup, and he wanted water. He asked for water—beggars like, they used to be. He puts the ketchup in the water, and my father chased him out of the restaurant. He said, "Don't come back here again." (Chuckles) Because that's why he went around, getting water. But pitiful, yeah? So I guess those days, they had those—they used to call them beggars.
- MK: You know, before I forget, you know, you mentioned that it was like sort of after you folks moved from Heart Mountain to St. Paul, that your father heard about your relative dying at Hiroshima, yeah?
- GH: Oh no, as soon as we got to St. Paul.
- MK: Oh, you folks heard about it.
- GH: As soon as we got there, he got a telegram. So because the war was just over the atomic bomb ended the war. Just about that time, I can't remember before or after that we were leaving for St. Paul. So as soon as we got there, he got the wire. That was a real shocker for him. That's when he found out the rest that his parents were all right. Because they all went to the mountains. See, they sent flyers, yeah, to tell them to, don't stay there. Yeah, just keep on going into the hillside, whatever. So they all went. And he and my uncle stayed behind—I had another uncle—my auntie's husband—he had leukemia in the end). Leukemia or anyway, some kind of cancer. You know, they all ended up with cancer, yeah? That's from radiation. They moved to Hawai'i, and almost all of that family ended up with cancer.

MK: And you know, like when your father and mom heard about the ending of the war, would you remember how they reacted to the end of the war?

GH: I don't remember too much, except the atomic bomb was a shock, yeah? It was a real shock.

MK: And how about you folks? You and your siblings, how did you folks react to . . .

GH: Well, we didn't have much views on it, actually. And we were kind of untouched by it all. Being in camp, too, because you know, in camp, you don't get news. You only get secondhand news. Camp newspaper would tell you what's going on, a few things. But we don't really get firsthand news. So we were out of touch with the world, except you know, we heard about the war being—the atomic bomb, and you know, things like that. But other than that, we didn't hear too much.

MK: Now, we've got you to St. Paul, Minnesota. Your family had the restaurant. We heard a little bit about your time at school. And then March or April 1946 . . .

GH: We came back.

MK: Yeah, how come?

GH: Oh, because we always wanted to come back to Hawai'i. And finally, he got approval. You see, we couldn't come back. That's why he was just killing time in St. Paul. We had to leave camp. We had to go somewhere, and what can he do in the meantime? We don't know when they're going to let us come back. And so, even though the war was over, I guess the red tape—whatever it took—he didn't get permission to come home. So St. Paul ended up around (eight) months.

MK: Mm-hmm [yes].

GH: Yeah, about there. So as soon as he got word, he said, "Okay, let's go home." So that's what happened. So he sold the restaurant.

WN: So you're in St. Paul for . . .

GH: About (eight) months.

WN: Wow, so he came from camp, open up a business, and rent a business for [eight] months. That's remarkable. (Laughs)

GH: Yeah, a booming business.

(Laughter)

WN: Wow.

GH: And then, so when we were coming home, we flew back. They had to pay our expenses. We flew back. And then, in LA, he had this friend who was an importer—seafood importer. He was in camp with us, too. Anyway, so he's the man we used to go and visit every time after that in California. He was a good friend of my dad's. We went there, and there was a hostel, I think. They had hostels set up for people like us, coming back to Hawai'i. They had to temporarily put us up. So we stayed there—I don't know how many nights—until the ship. . . . They shipped us back on a merchant marine ship.

MK: Really? Oh.

GH: And only a few of us, not too many. It wasn't like the *Lurline* the last time when we came in a whole group because most of the people came back already. We were one of the last ones. I think Pat them all came back already. December, huh, they came back?

- MK: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes].
- WN: December '45.
- GH: Oh, okay.
- WN: You guys came back . . .
- GH: March '46. So by the time we came back, most of them were back. So I don't remember who was on the ship. There were merchant marines on the ship, but very few families besides us. So anyway, that's how we came back. (Chuckles)
- MK: And then, when you came back . . .
- GH: We had our house.
- MK: Yeah.
- GH: We just moved right into our house.
- MK: So your uncle folks . . .
- GH: He went back to their house.
- MK: Oh.
- GH: They had their house. So lucky for us, you know, we had a place.
- WN: Yeah.
- GH: All he had to do was buy a car and went back to work. But that's when he found out, and he was very disappointed with what he saw, you know. The bakery and all. And then, he decided to move. He said, "Ah, let's move. We're going to sell this house and move on to another house." So we moved further up to Liliha side, near Judd Street. And so, at that time, the bakery—the cotton factory was already shut down. Way, way back, it was shut down. I think during the war, maybe. And so, they converted that into a rental unit because there was a family that came from Kaua'i. I still remember this family—they had a sick child who needed a place to stay. So he fixed it all up and let them stay there because they had to come to Honolulu for medical reasons, you know, to get treated. So they stayed in there. I still remember. And. . . .
- MK: And then the bakery?
- GH: And the bakery, they tried to revive it with maybe making it into a retail—to improve the retail. So they sent the baker to learn how to do pastries (chuckles) because he never did too much pastries. He did the same kind he did thirty, forty years ago. And so, the cookies and everything, we remember what we saw when we were little—still the same. So they sent him to be more (of) a pastry chef and to learn, but he's stubborn. He didn't want to change.
- WN: When you say "they," who is "they"?
- GH: The uncles.
- WN: Okay, yeah.
- GH: And so, he didn't want change. So they gave up the idea. They did a few things, but they gave up. But they could not get the bakery—the bread side, the wholesale side—up to what it used to be. Because, you know, they lost a lot of business. It was hard to get it back because by that time, other bakeries were around, I think. Besides, Love's [Bakery]

got bigger, and they lost a lot. So they never could recoup. So finally, my dad—my brother used to work there. That's right. My father said, "If you want to work there, I'll give it to you. You have my share, and I'm going to retire." He's too young to retire, but he said he'll do something else. So he said, "Then, you can take over my share."

But my brother started working in the back in the bakery. And he's not a salesman. My brother is definitely—he's so different from my father. But he said he'll try. He'll go and work in the back with my uncles. But you know, he had hay fever. He couldn't stand all that flour! He was sneezing all the time. So finally, he told my dad, "I can't do that. I can't work in the bakery. So I think I'm going to school. I think I'll go away to school. I'll go back to Chicago and go to school."

That year, he got married. My sister got married. They both got married the same year. In fact, my grandmother died—was it that year she died? He went back to Japan because she saved a kimono for my sister—wedding kimono. My sister is the one that played *shamisen*. She's the only one that's more Japanesey. You know, she could wear all those things. (Chuckles) She got married Japanese-style, you know. It was really nice.

So anyway, he went back to Japan. And then he saw what the Western occupation did. He wanted to go back to Japan and (start a) business. (Laughs) My mother didn't want to go with him. She said, "No, I'm not going. I'm not moving already." You know, I feel sorry for her because she did move so much.

He said, "But, you can make money in Japan!" Because this was occupation days. Oh, they made a lot of money. And so when he went there, and he saw all of that. He said, "I have all kinds of ideas of what we can do, either go in business in Tokyo or whatever." He wanted to do all kinds of things, but she refused to go. So he stayed in Hawai'i. He was very disenchanted with Hawai'i, he said, after the war. All the changes.

MK: So how did he make a go, then, in Hawai'i? He retired—your father retired.

GH: He started selling, all kinds of things. Selling things. The bakery, I guess, they always had a certain amount of salary. My brother lived with us. He got married, and he lived with us. So I don't know how they managed financially, but we moved. We moved to a bigger (and) newer house.

MK: Judd Street.

GH: Yeah. I don't know how he did all of that because he must have had something left when we came back. He was doing all kinds of selling. In fact, when I was kind of at loose ends there, I used to tag along with him. He used to make me write up his orders. (Chuckles) Things like that. But he used to go and visit old friends—all his cronies. All businessmen. So he used to go and visit them. He visited this friend who had this nice restaurant, who used to make good *tempura*. He learned how to do that. He said, "Someday, I'm going to have my own restaurant again, and I'm going to make *tempura*." That's the only thing he can make because he doesn't cook. My mother is a real good cook.

So all the time when my brother said he wanted to go back to the Mainland—that's the year he got married. My sister got married, too. They both got married the same year. My brother-in-law said, "I want to go with you. We'll both go to school." So that's how we ended up going back to Chicago.

My father said, "Let's all go then." Because he was very unhappy with Hawai'i. He didn't have anything to do here already. He said, "I'll sell out everything I have." He said, "I'll sell out my shares, too." Because it was kind of a dying business, he felt. No hope. He didn't want to stay there, in the bakery. (So) he sold all his property. And then, he said, "We'll all go." That's how we ended up going. (Chuckles)

WN: How did your mom feel?

GH: My mother didn't feel too bad then (about) Chicago—because the whole family was going to be together.

WN: Oh, I see, I see.

GH: My brother, you know. And they had a baby, too, a grandchild and all that. But Japan, she kind of felt that he's going to go back to his (old) ways. He used to fool around and all those things. You know how men used to be in the old days? She didn't want to put up with all of that. So I think she kind of felt that's why he wanted to go to Japan.

MK: Yeah, yeah. Chicago would be better?

GH: Yeah, she felt that Chicago, maybe it would be better. More stable for him.

WN: Now this is in '51?

GH: Fifty-one.

WN: Backing up just a little bit, you came back to Hawai'i, you went to Farrington. Yeah, and you folks lived in Judd Street at the time.

GH: Mm-hmm [yes].

WN: What was that like? I mean, that's an adjustment. You know, you were in camp all this time, or . . .

GH: We were living in Kalihi at first.

WN: . . . coming back to Hawai'i?

GH: We went back to our old house, at first. It was really strange because, you know, everybody knew we came back. They really don't understand why we went. I mean, how do you tell people—even going back to school? They don't know why we went. We don't talk about it. Some people didn't even know we went to camp. They don't know any—there's kind of like a blank spot in between, you know. And so, we just started making new friends again in school.

WN: Mm-hmm [yes].

MK: Did people even ask you, like, . . .

GH: Oh, the only thing I remember . . .

MK: "Grace, where did you go to?"

GH: When we came back, I was ninth grade. I had to finish last semester in ninth grade. So I had to go to Kalākaua [Intermediate School]. And my cousin—I had another cousin who was very active in the newspaper—school newspaper and all that. So he said, "We want to interview you." Because here, I was a celebrity—for them, I was a celebrity. I came back from the Mainland, they wanted to know all about my experience. So that's how they asked me a lot of things. They did an article in the paper that, you know, I was the only one in the whole school that went to camp. (Chuckles) So anyway, from there, right after that, I went to Farrington [High School]. We've been, you know, moving so much, that's why we don't have—I think we talk about it every so often. That we don't have strong, strong ties with—like, you know, if you had a best friend. We don't have that because we make friends, we lose them, we make friends, and you know, it's been constant. So . . .

MK: Well, you know, because you had spent, you know, a good number of years on the Mainland with white people and going to school on the Mainland, were you treated differently at Farrington from other . . .

GH: No, except when I went to ninth grade, I felt they were so young. I felt they were so young because I came from high school, back to intermediate. Going backwards. Because ninth grade was still intermediate. Now it's high school.

MK: Yeah, yeah.

GH: But from high school—on the Mainland, ninth grade was high school. So here I came from high school to intermediate. Oh, they all look so young. To me, they were so immature because our experiences were so different. You know, what we went through. So I noticed that right away though, first thing when I came back.

MK: And how about like your speech? I mean, you didn't sound like a Kalihi girl anymore.

GH: No, no. Not as much. But still, we had a little bit of that. We had, still, a little accent, yeah, I think. You don't lose that.

MK: Or how you dressed? Or how you . . .

GH: Yeah, how we dressed. Definitely, how we dressed. But it was funny because we left all our snow boots at the airport in St. Paul. We just left them, all lined up by the restroom. What can we do? We needed it. It was snowing, snowing, snowing when we left. And we had to wear everything, we had to wear all warm things. We went to LA. Each time, you know, it's getting warmer and warmer. We went to LA, and it was so warm. We had all these heavy coats we had to unload. We had to unload all of the heavy coats. We come back to Hawai'i, we had nothing but sweaters and warm skirts. Typical Mainland style, sweater and skirts. That's all we wore. Oh, we had a hard time going to school because what can we wear? You know, only warm things, we had. So we had to start all over, looking for light clothing. And the style is so different. See, for us, it was so different. So it's an adjustment all the time. (Chuckles)

MK: And in many respects, you were probably—you were more mature than . . .

GH: In some ways, because of what we went through.

MK: . . . most kids. You went through all that.

GH: That's right. Because they were more sheltered. They were more sheltered. They haven't seen the things we have seen. Mm-hmm [yes].

MK: And what was it like going to school at Farrington?

GH: Farrington was not like nowadays. They talk about Farrington being so rough and all that, yeah. It wasn't like that so much, but I don't know. (Chuckles)

MK: Was it a happier time for you than . . .

GH: Farrington was maybe.

MK: . . . in Minnesota or elsewhere?

GH: Farrington was, I guess, better than all the other schools because I stayed there the longest. I went right through from sophomore to senior. I made new friends.

MK: And this time, could you participate in school activities?

GH: Not much. I didn't do much. There were three of us again. We were still going. So one sister graduated—sophomore, junior, senior—so I guess she was already (a) senior. I don't know what I did in high school. I mean, it wasn't like a lot of kids nowadays, where school is such a happy place. (Chuckles) I don't have that much good memories, though. Maybe it was okay. I mean, I had friends, and we used to go to the games and do things.

And Saturday, we would go out. But I didn't have strong attachments. I notice that. Whenever I observe all these shows where these kids, they have their best friends—I never had that experience. I never had the kind of best friends that you can't part with or you're always together, you know.

Of course, we had sisters. And that's the difference, too. When you have four sisters—four girls—and you're close, I think, in a way, it's good and bad. Because of that, we don't go out of our way to make friends. We do things together. Like weekends, we would say, "Oh, you want to go Downtown?" We'll find somebody to with, you know. We'll find somebody to do things with. Same thing in Chicago, that's how we were. There's always sisters around, yeah, to do things with. We all had our friends for our age group, but still, as sisters, we used to go—even for dates, we used to go out with the same group of boys. We used to go out together. Sometimes, my father wants to come with us. (MK laughs.) You know, when we go with the whole group. And we go to the beach sometimes, you know, at night? Let's go, to a moonlight picnic. He wants to come with us.

(Laughter)

And he used to play *hanafuda* with the boys. My brother-in-law always talks about it because, "You'd think I came visit him or something."

Because first thing he come, if he's lonesome, he would say, "Okay, let's get the cards out." He wants to play *hanafuda*. (WN and MK laugh.)

MK: Your dad was a cool guy. (Laughs)

GH: Oh, but sometimes, they couldn't get rid of him.

MK: Oh, my. And then, so you went to Farrington and as it got nearer to graduation, what were you . . .

GH: I didn't have any plans, you know.

MK: . . . thinking of doing?

GH: Yeah, you know, the thing is that—something about—I think my parents, either they were busy with other things or what, but they never encouraged us to continue going to school. And I didn't till later, you know—I regretted it later. My sister said, "Well, it's not too late. You can still go." But then, I got married so young. You know, I got married two years later. Twenty-one, I think, I got married.

But you know, I can't blame my parents. But still, if they had encouraged us a little more, maybe I would have. Because my mother used to just tell me—you see, because it's not like we couldn't afford to go. So that's the sad part of it. My mother used to say, "Why don't you go to school and be a nurse?" Because to her family, her sisters are all nurses. She started out in a doctor's office.

MK: Oh yeah.

GH: So she would (say), "Why don't you go and be a nurse?" To her, that's how she would try to tell me to go to school. Or if not, go be a schoolteacher. That's how it used to be before. You're either a schoolteacher or a nurse.

So I said, "I don't know if I want to go to school and study some more." I said, "I don't know if I feel like doing that for so many years."

She go, "Oh, but you should think about that." That's the only we she used to say it. Never made me feel that I have to go to school.

My father would say, “Oh, you’re not going to the university?” Like that, you know. Very casual. So, in a way, we weren’t raised with that. If you’re raised thinking you’re going to do it, you’re going to do it. So that’s why, you know, none of us had that kind of ambition. It’s too bad.

MK: And then, after you graduated—by ’51, the family’s back in Chicago?

GH: Uh-huh [yes], we went back. By that time, I met my husband. My first husband. I had met him, so then, he was kind of pressured. I guess, what can you do, yeah? I’m going away, and I’m too young to get married. So my mother said, “Oh, yeah, you’re too young to even think about things like that.” I was just going out with him not that long. So he wanted to get engaged, and she said, “Why don’t you wait and go to Chicago and see. If you don’t change your mind, then you know, you can always get engaged and come back and get married.”

MK: Yeah.

GH: So that’s what I did. My sister, too. She was going with her husband now, all through—I think, all through high school, she was going with him. So they were going for a long time. And so, she decided to go, too, and come back. She came back six months later to get married. So eventually, she and I were the only ones here. We came back to get married. The rest of the family was in Chicago.

WN: So you came back in ’52 to get married?

GH: Fifty-two, yeah.

WN: So moved to Chicago in ’51, and then, you came back in ’52.

GH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes].

MK: And the rest of your life, here?

GH: Yeah. And they (all gradually) moved from Chicago to LA. Then I spent a lot of time in LA, California. I mean, I used to go—every year, I took my kids. Every summer, we used to go vacation. So you know, it was like a second home. Because (while) my parents were alive, I would visit them.

MK: And how many kids do you have?

GH: I have two girls.

MK: Two girls?

GH: Mm-hmm [yes]. One is here, and the dancer one is in Berkeley. So Jill is in Berkeley.

MK: So that’s Jill. And your other one is here?

GH: Kim, mm-hmm [yes].

MK: Well, do you have any other . . .

WN: Reflections?

MK: Yeah, anything else you want to add? You know, on . . .

GH: I forgot. I was going to say something, and I forgot. So easy to forget. (Chuckles)

WN: You know, you’ve gone through so many changes—physically, as well as mentally. You know, if you had to look back at your life, what did all this mean to you?

GH: Well, I think it was an education. I think that what we went through was such an experience that it was worth it. It was worth it, what we learned, what we gained from it, and not many people can go through what we went through. (Chuckles) So you know, I feel that, in a way, I have had a good experience. My life was good. I've had a good life. It's not hardship, you know, so much. That was the only period in my life that was a little hard. But other than that, you know, my life is pretty good.

WN: And then, for future generations, what would you want them to learn about from your experiences?

GH: What is it about, discrimination and all of that?

WN: Well, just your own experiences. I mean, they're going to be studying the World War II experience, whether they're Japanese or not.

GH: Yeah, I mean, even my grandkids—they know. I've talked to my kids about it, so that's why Jill is very interested in that subject. In fact, we're going to Chicago in a few months. I want to go see Chicago again. She and I are going to go to Chicago in April, I think. But yeah, I've talked to them about it, from the time they were young. So they were always interested. My grandkids—we talk about it, so they know, too. My grandson just started college. So I think he knows more about it now. I think that for them to hear it from me, you know, what we experienced and all of that—the world is changing. That's not going to happen again. I just saw the other video—a friend of mine loaned me—on the one that Ken Watanabe did. Did you hear about that one? Ken Watanabe did with the Middle Easterners? All that—since 9-11?

MK: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

GH: And how they treated them, the Japanese said, "No, we don't want this to happen again." It's like that. So it was a very similar situation. The way they were discriminating against the Middle Easterners. So these things, they're trying to avoid, more and more, from happening again. I think, each time, it's improving. People's minds are more open compared to before. A lot of bigotry is from ignorance. And we found that it was true because more of ignorant people were like that. The educated people are, you know, knowledgeable, and they're not that way at all. In fact, that's why, in camp, my father got along with administration. He was able to talk to them and all of that because they treated him like a person. They didn't talk down at them.

But anyway, it's just like my dad. He has to say that he had a good experience that not many people would've had to go through. So it's like all of us. I think that it made our life more interesting in some ways. Not that we wanted to do it, but it did make our life more interesting and richer in experience, I think.

MK: And you know, I was wondering, have you ever revisited the camps?

GH: I didn't go. Pat went to Jerome. I didn't go.

MK: Yeah, you didn't go to that one?

GH: And Jill asked me if I want to go to Heart Mountain, I didn't want to go. The only thing I saw is that the Japanese—in LA, the Japanese museum, they had the barrack from Heart Mountain.

MK: Yeah, yeah.

GH: And I saw that. And then, when Smithsonian opened the first exhibit, I was there. It was very emotional. I was there with my husband—this husband. We were on a trip to Washington D.C., and I said, "Oh, I have to go and see that exhibit. They just opened it."

WN: "And Justice for All," I think it was called.

- GH: Uh-huh [yes], yeah. And they had exact barrack replicas. I walked in there, and I tell you I got so emotional. I didn't know I would feel like that. See, you don't know until it happens. I walked in there, I felt I was in another world. It's in my past. It's just the past coming right before me. It was a strange feeling, you know? I just stood there, frozen almost. It was like I'm in that barrack again, you know? How many years ago would that be? Oh, they really did a nice job. What they did.
- WN: I guess, too, seeing what you experienced, now is a part of history in a museum.
- GH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [yes]. That's right.
- WN: That must have been a strange, strange feeling to you.
- GH: That's right. Imagine, yeah? So when I saw the one of Heart Mountain in the LA museum, I had that feeling. But already, I went through the shock in Washington, so it wasn't as bad. But they did a nice job, too. But that was a traveling one, I think. It's not there, huh?
- WN: The Smithsonian?
- GH: The Heart Mountain one.
- WN: Oh.
- MK: Yeah, they rebuilt . . .
- GH: No, in LA.
- WN: The Japanese-American National Museum?
- MK: Yeah, they've got an actual one and . . .
- GH: They just put it there temporarily, I think. The Smithsonian is permanent, or is that a traveling?
- WN: I don't know. I don't even know if it's still open.
- GH: Oh, and now they have all the monuments.
- MK: Mm-hmm [yes].
- WN: Right, right.
- GH: Of all the camps. Jill sent me a picture of all that, too. Yeah.
- WN: Well, shall we . . .
- GH: Okay, I kept you folks here a long time.
- MK: No, we want to thank you!
- WN: Thank you so much. Thank you . . .
- GH: Oh, this was a long one.
- WN: . . . very much. This was so interesting and educational for us. Thank you.

MK: You know, your dad was a real survivor.

END OF INTERVIEW

Unspoken Memories:

Oral Histories of Hawai‘i Internees at Jerome, Arkansas

**Center for Oral History
Social Science Research Institute
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